

HALESOWEN CHRONICLE



Thursday, February 21, 2013

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Trevor's time

Football legend drops in for community awards

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Break-ins force Yeltz to beef up security

HALESOWEN Football Club has been forced to step up security at its ground following a spate of overnight vandalism.

The club has already installed steel gates, but is looking to further upgrade the defences at The Grove, in Old Hawne Lane.

It follows a two-month period where the club has suffered regular overnight break-ins which resulted in doors being knocked down, equipment damaged and rubbish scattered around.

The club has reported the problem to police and officers have stepped up patrols.

Gary Willetts, the club's management board supporter representative, said: "It's a shame because we are a community club, but have been targeted by a small section of the same community which has no regard for what we do."

"It has left us with no option but to get extra security in and look to install even more over the summer months."

"It's disappointing it has had to come to this."

A spokesman for West Midlands Police said: "We have worked with the football club to provide crime prevention solutions which will address the issues of youths accessing the ground without permission."

Pupils' art marks 175th

CHILDREN'S artworks will be marking the 175th anniversary of a Halesowen school.

Halesowen C of E Primary School is celebrating the milestone year with an exhibition of pupils' paintings and sculptures in the main hall.

Headteacher Angel Hannaway said: "The school has got a very rich history and has changed a considerable amount in its time."

The school will invite parents to an evening viewing of the display on February 25, before opening to the public on February 26 and 27.

The collection includes works from all the pupils.

£18m VILLAGE IS GIVEN GO-AHEAD

by Sharon Marris

A CONTROVERSIAL, £18m retirement village in Cradley Heath which will create more than 40 jobs has been given the go-ahead by Dudley Council planners.

The village on the site of the former Cradley High School, had previously been recommended for approval by Dudley council planners. The scheme had attracted concerns about the effect of the increased traffic when it was first proposed.

It will see 120 independent living flats for older people in a complex with a 79-space car park near to Homer Hill Park on the old Cradley High School site, which was demolished in 2010. Part of the permission includes for 11 homes to back on to Ormane Close and, after residents expressed concerns about the four-storey building towering over their houses, Midland Heart revised the plans to a three-storey building. But it met opposition when the council's planning development committee met this week.

Councillor Richard Body, ward member for Cradley and Wollescote, appeared as a member of the public to fight the plans because of a proposed roadway.

He told the councillors: "I've nothing against the extra care homes but I want you to think long and hard about the residents of the area."

"We've worked long and hard to make Homer Hill Park a place where children can play and those walking their dogs and playing sport can go."

"They (housing and care organisation Midland Heart) want to put a road through a local park which I find is absolutely wrong."

But Councillor Tim Wright said: "We have a duty to provide a way forward for social care and I can see no reason in planning terms why this site should not be developed. It ticks all the boxes."

Ageing

Councillor Colin Wilson agreed, adding: "We have an ageing population in Dudley and the band of ages 55 plus will do nothing but increase."

The committee's chairman Rachel Harris said she was aware of the concerns that had previously been raised by 31 residents but said: "We have to make our decision based on planning considerations."

The scheme has previously attracted criticism from Jennie Dunn, who sits on the board of governors at Cradley CE Primary School, which is near the proposed development site. She was concerned there would not be enough parking spaces for the number of residents, staff and visitors.

She said although the concept of a retirement complex was good for the area, she feared increased traffic could be dangerous for children walking to and from school.

Finance plan is drawn up to save hall

CAMPAIGNERS fighting to save a community hall in Halesowen say they are confident of their goal after drafting a business plan for the future of the centre.

The Hatsby Action Group has put pressure on Dudley Council to stop the sale of the closed Sons of Rest building in Alexandra Road since it went on the market last year.

Now the group, fronted by Labour activist Ian Cooper, has drafted a business plan for the council to reopen the centre for nearby community groups again.

The group claims to have found about 20 groups which would use the site – but at a cheaper rate than they faced before the centre closed.

Mr Cooper, who stood for a seat in the Hatsby Green and Cradley South last May, said: "The reason it closed was because of falling use, mainly down to the fact many of the group were priced out by rising rents."

"This led to the managing committee struggling to keep the place open. Our business plan is different."

"We want to offer well-priced room hire to groups and bring them back to the centre. We have found many groups, young and old, keen to use the centre on this basis."

"I'm confident we can do this."

More than 200 people have signed a petition against the proposed sale.

Volunteer work is honoured



Dudley Mayor Melvyn Mottram with the borough's award-winning volunteers including Joshim Uddin of Halesowen and Sandra Emery, at the front

AWARD-WINNING volunteers from Halesowen have been honoured at a special ceremony.

Unfortunately the celebration had to be postponed because of heavy snowfall.

The special guest list included Young Volunteer of the Year 18-year-old Ryan Howard, of Halesowen.

He gives up every weekend to coach youngsters in soccer skills with Stourbridge based Mini Kickers, part of Forest Falcons Football Club.

Sporting Champion Bob Hickman, of Halesowen, was honoured for his dedication to Halas Hawks Junior Football Club.

Volunteers who were highly commended or very highly commended were also given accolades.

They included Joshim Uddin of Shell Corner, Halesowen, for campaigning and representing the views of young disabled people with neurological conditions.

Lenny is to finally have the freedom

DUDLEY-born comedian Lenny Henry will now have a Freedom of the Borough after councillors reached a consensus over bestowing the honour.

Councillors had delayed their pledge to reward the funnyman after some members raised concerns that Mr Henry may not meet the existing criteria for the civic award.

This came despite a public announcement by Dudley Council saying the move has the support of both political party group leaders at the council at the time.

But now a working party of councillors has drawn up criteria to honour people who make an "eminent contribution to the life of the borough" in a bid to recognise the stand-up comic and actor.

He said the Conservative group would discuss the issue further on Thursday ahead of the full council.

Under the newly established criteria, personalities in the world of entertainment, culture, medicine, sports, public services, sciences, social care and the economy can now be awarded the traditional scroll signifying the Freedom of the Borough.

The criteria and the award for Lenny Henry are expected to be agreed at a meeting of the full council on February 25.

Dudley Council leader, Councillor David Sparks, said: "The working party has done a great job in clearing this situation up. Lenny Henry clearly more than fulfills the new criteria."

Town enjoys crime drop

CRIME in Halesowen dropped by 12 per cent in a year, police claim.

Insp Dez Lambert said the reduction in crime in the town was a further drop from the year before.

Speeding, parking and dog fouling are among residents' key policing priorities, he told a Community Forum meeting this week.

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Trial move to beat illegal fishing

ANGLERS have been fishing illegally in a pool at a popular park - prompting bosses to trial all year round opening to combat them.

Extra security has been drafted in at Himley Park, on the border of Dudley and South Staffordshire, to protect the water at night and prevent the theft of fish during the closed season.

Now the council, which runs the site, is taking steps to stop the illegal

activity by keeping the Great Pool open to anglers all year round on a trial basis.

The closed season normally runs from mid-March to mid-June to allow fish stocks to be replenished.

But bosses hope the move will stop illegal fishing by increasing the amount of the time the pool is open.

The council said they would assess the impact of the extended fishing time before make a decision

on whether to make the move permanent.

The council spent £1,404 on additional security last year, Dudley's environment chief Councillor Tracy Wood said.

She added: "The enforced closed season at Himley Park appears to be encouraging illegal angling on the lake by people using inappropriate equipment, thus harming the health of the fish." This problem is exacerbated at night when there are no duty wardens on site and no night time fishing syndicate members on site and issues regarding the theft of high value specimen fish have arisen at night time during the closed season.

"This issue was considered problematic enough in 2012 that a security company was temporarily contracted to prevent illegal fishing and fish theft."

Officials in vow to find new practice

HEALTH officials have vowed to find a new doctor for about 1,500 patients who will be left without a GP when a practice closes next month.

Kates Hill Surgery, Dudley, closes on March 28 - three years after opening.

Officials said the Wolverton Road practice failed to attract enough new patients.

It opened in April 2010 after Dudley's primary care trust, NHS Dudley, commissioned it. The trust is being abolished at the end of March. It is now part of the Black Country Cluster.

Cluster spokesman Richard Haynes said: "Despite the excellent services offered at the surgery, there have been lower numbers of patients registering with the practice than was expected when the contract was commissioned."

"It was intended that the high quality services and extended opening times at Kates Hill would attract a higher number of patients than has been the case. This means it is no longer viable to continue running the service."

"We are working closely with the surgery team to make sure that all the patients registered with Kates Hill Surgery are supported to register with an alternative practice."

Jobs lost at steel firm

TEN jobs have been lost after a Dudley steel stockholding business went into administration.

The workers were made redundant before administrators were appointed to D J Jasper (Steels) of Wartell Bank, Dawley Brook Road, Kingswinford. Three workers have been kept on to assist administrators PKF who are searching for a buyer for the firm. PKF said there had been some interest in buying the assets of the business.

21 sex charges

A DUDLEY man is facing 21 indecent assault charges. The accusations against Mark Passmore, aged 48, of High Street, Pensnett, include indecent assaults on a girl under 14 and attempting to rape a girl under 16. Passmore has been bailed and he will reappear at Wolverhampton Crown Court on May 8.

Prescription for a charity climb



Pharmacist Dinesh Patel preparing for his charity expedition to climb Mount Kilimanjaro

A CHARITY fundraiser has set off to climb Mount Kilimanjaro.

Pharmacist Dinesh Patel had been in training before flying out to Nairobi for the charity event. The intrepid 54-year-old had been training for the past few weeks including gym sessions and walking with a backpack filled with bottles of water to test his strength. He has also walked between his five pharmacies across the region, including

the Hawne Chemist, Stourbridge Road, Halesowen, and Millard and Bullock Pharmacy, in Castle Street, Coseley.

"It will be the trip of a lifetime," said Mr Patel, who lives in Romsley. He is travelling as part of a group scaling the 19,000ft peak in Tanzania. They hope to reach the summit within four days with a walk through the night to reach the peak as the sun rises today.

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Have say over mail move bid

THE Post Office is planning to move its branch at Dudley's Merry Hill shopping centre into a larger spot indoors.

Shoppers are being invited to have their say on the proposals to relocate the office, which is opposite the bus station.

Its new home would be on the upper level of the centre, next to the management centre.

The move is part of a major modernisation programme by the Post Office across its network. It would lead to the Merry Hill branch's opening hours being extended by 11 hours a week, from Monday to Saturday.

Post Office regional network manager for Central England, Adrian Wales, said: "We understand how important having a Post Office is to customers at the Merry Hill Centre. We are confident that this new modern branch will meet the needs of the local community and secure services for the future."

The Post Office wants locals to give their feedback about the Merry Hill proposal before March 14.

Send in their views by Freepost to Your Comments to Post Office Ltd, via email to comments@postoffice.co.uk or by calling 08457 223344.

Children in story time

CHILDREN put on their pyjamas and enjoyed a special bedtime story session with Halesowen father turned author Lee Howell at a library.

The youngsters arrived at Cradley Library in Colley Lane, dressed in their pyjamas and enjoyed a drink and a biscuit as they listened to him reading his own work "Millie's Magic Bed".

He wrote the book as a Christmas gift for his daughters. Bedtime stories run on the last Thursday of each month at Cradley Library. The next session will be on February 28.

Work postponed

VITAL work needed to improve a secondary school canteen has been postponed.

Staff at Woodgreen Academy, Wednesbury were left devastated after ITV's Daybreak pulled a feature that could have seen the school receive £250,000 improvements. Headteacher Pank Patel said they were still hopeful they could find the money.



The front of the theatre desperately needs a lick of paint and some tender loving care



Damaged and dirty steps leading inside the former Hippodrome Theatre

Inside pictures are latest weapon in theatre battle

FROM the fly tower used to hoist scenery into place to the art deco coving and dressing rooms once graced by stars of the stage – a display of pictures of Dudley Hippodrome are the latest campaign weapon supporters hope will save the venue from demolition.

Campaigners fighting to save Dudley Hippodrome photographed the historical features in the threatened building to get people to back their fight to stop the theatre being levelled.

Council officers have already submitted plans to knock down the council-owned former theatre to make way for the major Castle Hill development. But The Friends of Dudley Hippodrome say the 1930s building should be saved and restored to welcome the biggest stars of the stage.

The building has been empty since 2009 when Gala Bingo shut.

Around 30 people attended a public meeting held at The Station Hotel when the images, taken by campaigner Dr Paul Collins, were put on show for the first time.

The images show the intact fly tower which has more than 20 hoists to change the scenery and move equipment during a production.

Acoustics

The collection also shows the architectural features of the ceilings and walls to enhance acoustics, the art deco fixtures and fittings and even two dressing rooms with doors that still bear the names Moscow and Madrid – a tradition in theatres.

Dr Collins said: "This is a solid steel structured building, it is very much fit for purpose. And, although some of the bingo areas have been vandalised, a lot of that is only cosmetic."

Chairman of the group Geoff Fitzpatrick said: "The thing is many people just think of the hippodrome as a bingo hall. They don't realise there are all these wonderful features hidden inside. People have forgotten."

"With these images I hope we can show people what it is like, and remind them of the fantastic features which are hidden away."

Campaigner Joanna Roden said the group was hoping to preserve the future of the building.

She said: "It's not about the past anymore, this is all about the future, about how the hippodrome could work, and benefit Dudley."

"We have the Black Country Living Museum and the zoo that people visit during the day, if we reopened the theatre it would boost our evening economy. We could start offering tourist packages to Dudley."



Theatre friends Paul Collins, Martin Whitehead and Joanna Roden



Geoff Fitzpatrick, chairman of the friends' group speaking on the campaign to save the theatre



One of the cornices inside Dudley Hippodrome

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NEWS

in brief

Inscription plan for war memorial
A FIRST World War memorial in Kidderminster will be inscribed to commemorate soldiers who have died in other conflicts.

The Angel of Peace statue by St Mary and All Saints Church pays tribute to the dead of the 1914-1918 war. Kidderminster Charter Trustees want to add an inscription to the base of the statue stating: "In proud and undying memory of all men and women connected with Kidderminster who gave their lives in the 1939-45 war and all other conflicts".

£10,000 of bikes stolen from shed

THREE bikes, worth a total of £10,000, have been stolen from a garden shed in Kidderminster.

Police described them as "distinctive" and appealed for help from witnesses.

Two of the bikes are for off-road use – a white Santa Cruz Juliana worth £2,000 and a black Santa Cruz V10 worth £6,000.

The other is a yellow Carrera road bike worth £2,000. The bikes were taken from a shed off Alder Avenue between 7pm on Friday, February 8 and 8.40am the next day.

Major roadworks have reached end

A MAJOR 21-month-long roadworks scheme in Dudley town centre, which left many traders out of pocket, has finally been completed. Utility companies have been upgrading services and carrying out repairs in 53 streets since April 2011.

Dudley Council said the final phase of the work, which in Wolverhampton Street was finished last week.

Premature babies support meeting

A GROUP to help the families of premature babies is organising a "chintzy vintage-style" cafe and cake sale on March 8.

The event, run by Dudley Bliss Family Group, will be held from 10am to 2pm at the Secret Coffee Club in Insight House, Pearson Street, off High Street, Brierley Hill.

Volunteers are needed to help sell the cakes.

Beef still on menu

DUDLEY hospital bosses have said they will continue to put beef on the menu for patients, despite the horse meat scandal. Some Aldi and Findus beef products were removed from store shelves.

NEWS

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



YOU are what you eat. I had a beef pie on Tuesday and I've been a little hoarse ever since.

□□□□□□□

YES, I know there's a lot of it about. Throat full of razor blades, head full of snot and your voice suddenly dropping an octave. For men, there is one advantage of this chesty winter malady. At last we can all do a good impression of Lee Marvin's basso-profundo hit from *Paint Your Wagon*. All together now: I was born under a wandrin' star.

□□□□□□□

THE wrong sort of snow brought down an oak tree which in turn brought down all the phone lines in our neighbourhood. As I reported earlier, BT said on Monday it would be fixed in 48 hours. Fat chance. The engineer tells me it could have been sorted earlier but he had to wait for the man who decides whether telegraph poles are safe to climb. No surprises there, then.

□□□□□□□

TRYING to get our calls diverted was enough to make you tear your hair out. It involved the inevitable conversation with a call centre in India. When these call centres first opened I used to chat for ages with operators in Benares or Bangalore about where they were and where I was and how's the weather your end and who'd you fancy for the First Test? But over the years the fluent English speakers seem to have moved on. Call me paranoid but I suspect when I call up these days, the supervisor cups his hand over the phone and says to his team: "Rhodes on the line again. Anyone here not speak English?"

□□□□□□□

SO FAREWELL, Pope Benedict. Purely by chance we were in Italy when he became Pope in 2005. As we flipped between CNN and BBC in our hotel room, there was some confusion about events in the Vatican. Had the right colour of smoke emerged from the chimney? Had the cardinals made their decision or were they still haggling? Yet while CNN and the BBC dithered, all the church bells in Riva del Garda began ringing. Somehow, the people knew they had a new Pope and the sound of those bells echoing joyously over Lake Garda is a memory to treasure.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

It's every little bit part that helps Tesco extra

YOU may have seen John Walker dozens, maybe hundreds of times – but not necessarily working behind the deli counter at Dudley Tesco.

As well as serving up fresh fish, he works as a TV and film extra and has made more than 2,000 appearances over 14 years in 200 shows.

Whether it is playing a patient in *Casualty*, a crime officer in *Midsomer Murders* or a rioter in *The Bill*, he says he has played more characters than he can remember.

Most of the time, he is a face in the crowd or background, dressed up and asked to play a drinker in a pub in teen soap *Hollyoaks*; a Victorian man at the races in *The Invisible Woman* or an office worker in CBBC's *Bert and Dickie*.

As well as being a backgrounder he is also picked to play characters or be a double for another actor. He played Thomas Dent, a murderer in the ITV show *the Killers*; Great Train Robber Jimmy White in ITV drama *Mrs Biggs* and Professor Lennox in CBBC's *Wizards vs Aliens*.

He has also acted as Ewan Bremner's double in shows, including *Great Expectations*, where he stops a fight between two other characters, played by Robbie Coltrane and Tamzin Outhwaite.

Counter

Away from Tesco Extra, Burnt Tree, Dudley, he will pick up £80-£280 a day for screen roles.

It has also seen him find romance – meeting fiancée Neilum Raqia, aged 36, on the set of daytime show *Doctors* nearly five years ago.

"My role was to say to my wife, 'Joanne, she is here talking to Victor'", he said. "While saying it I looked off camera and saw the most beautiful woman I'd ever seen. I said the line a number of times and kept looking at her – straight away off screen we hit it off instantly."

The couple, of Holly Road, Dudley, set to marry in November, now combine work as extras on TV, and appeared together on *Misfits*, *Gavin and Stacey* and *Casualty*.

Acting started for John when he saw an advert to become an extra for a Doctor Who spin-off show



Day job – John Walker working at Tesco



John with Neilum Raqia in Misfits



The couple on the set of The Bill



As a couple of patients in Casualty



Solving crime in Midsomer Murders

Police in hunt for bike theft teenagers

POLICE are trying to trace three teenagers in connection with the robbery of a 10-year-old boy.

He was threatened and pushed off his bike by three boys at the skate park in Kenrick Park, West Bromwich, at about 4.30pm on Sunday, January 13.

The bike, a Stolen BMX has a red frame and white wheels with pictures of skulls and the word 'Stolen' on it.

One youth was white, aged 15-19, of skinny build with missing or discoloured teeth. He wore a black hooded top and dark coloured NY cap.

The other was 17-19, and about 6ft. He had dark eyebrows and brown eyes and is believed to have had a silver or black stud in his eyebrow and two piercings in his chin. He wore a black cap, dark hooded top and black body warmer.

The third was mixed race, aged 13-18, of skinny build and about 5ft 4ins. He had a piercing in his eyebrow and missing teeth. He wore a red boho hat.

Pothole problem

CARS were damaged after hitting a deep pothole on the M6. Emergency highways workers were called to repair the hole on the slip road from the M6 south onto the M5 at junction 9 near Great Barr. One lane was closed during repairs.

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Driver, 50, jailed over death crash



Driver, Jasminder Dhesi

A COACH driver who caused a crash on the M5 killing two people and injuring dozens more has started a six-year jail sentence.

Jasminder Singh Dhesi, from Great Barr, had been drinking high-strength lager hours before his unroadworthy coach broke down three times in foggy conditions on the motorway, where it was struck by a lorry at 54mph.

Birmingham Crown Court heard the 50-year-old failed a breath test after the crash, which claimed the lives of coach passenger Liaquat Ali and the lorry's driver William Mapstone. Dhesi was later below the drink-drive limit when a second sample was taken at a police station.

Mr Ali, from Smethwick, was pronounced dead at the scene, between junction three for Halesowen and four for Lydiat Ash on March 24 last year. Mr Mapstone, from Wells in Somerset, died in hospital.

Judge Michael Chambers QC told Dhesi, of Nether Hall Avenue, who pleaded guilty to causing death by dangerous driving, that the fatal accident had been avoidable.



The scene of the crash on the southbound M5 in which Liaquat Ali and William Mapstone died and 20 others injured

THE family of a Black Country man killed in a motorway crash have paid tribute to a "wonderful, husband, father and brother".

Father-of-three Liaquat Ali was killed when a lorry hit the back of the broken-down coach in which he was a passenger. Speaking after Great Barr coach driver Jasmin Singh Dhesi was jailed after admitting responsibility for the fatal crash, relatives spoke of their devastation.

Solicitor Katijah Ahmed read out a statement on behalf of Mr Ali's wife, Fozia Shaheen, and his brother, Ashfaq Ahmed, who survived the crash.

It said: "We have been through a tragic ordeal over the last 11 months. Liaquat was a wonderful husband, father and brother who doted over his three young children.

"Whilst we are relieved justice has been served. We will never be able to overcome our loss.

"For Fozia, in particular, her world ended on the morning of March 24, 2012. The family would like to thank everyone who has supported them through this

difficult time. The fight however is not over as the family so lovingly supported, continue to struggle without him."

The coach was struck by a lorry travelling at 54mph between Junction three for Halesowen and four for Lydiat Ash. The lorry's driver William Mapstone, from Somerset, later died in hospital.

Prosecutor Mr Neil Bannister told the court the single-decker coach had twice pulled over to the hard shoulder of the M5 due to a fuel supply problem.

Travelling

Despite travelling for less than a mile after joining the motorway near Halesowen, the 19-year-old coach broke down for a third time near a footbridge on a stretch of carriageway with no hard shoulder at 6.07am.

Several vehicles, including a crane and another lorry, were forced to take evasive action before Mr Mapstone's lorry struck.

Defence counsel Mr Raglan Ashton said Dhesi was a hard-working family man who was trying to drive to the



Victim, Liaquat Ali



William Mapstone

nearby service station. Relatives of Mr Mapstone were also at court to see Dhesi jailed. Speaking after the hearing, Mr Mapstone's son-in-law, Kai Markall, said: "The family would like to express their thanks to all of the emergency services and those that were involved on the day of this tragedy, who all worked tirelessly to minimise everyone's loss."

"Special thanks go to the family liaison officers who have helped provide the answers to all the painful questions we all wish to know when going through this unimaginable pain."

"William, dad, grandad, Bill Mapstone, leaves behind a loving wife, four beautiful children who in turn provided him with 14 heartbroken grandchildren."

"The loss of life and pain felt by the Mapstone family can never be measured in the sentence passed."

"The family can only hope that from this tragedy others will learn that your actions and choices in life can seriously affect others."

NEWS

in brief

New library wins architecture prize
A £60 million new library has won a top international architectural award.

The Hive, in Worcester, has earned the prize for the best "new build" project from the Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers. The centre, developed by Worcestershire County Council and the University of Worcester, opened in July.

Other buildings up for the award, which recognised good practice and renewable technologies, including the Titanic centre, Belfast, and Gardens by the Bay, Singapore.

The best beard contest brewing

A DUDLEY brewery is running a competition to find the best beard or moustache in the region to feature as the symbol for a new beer it is planning for 2014.

Fownes Brewing Company, based at The Crispin, Clarence Street, Upper Gornal, will judge the entries in December. Get entry forms at www.fownesbrewing.co.uk and photographs of beards can be sent to beards@fownes-brewing.co.uk

Appeal over peal

A CHURCH near Stourbridge needs more bell ringers. St John the Baptist, next to Hagley Hall, is appealing for people who already know how to ring bells – and those who would like to learn. Call 01562 886363.

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NEWS

Care home is failing to hit standards, says study

A CARE home failed to meet four essential standards for its residents – despite healthcare inspectors ordering improvements to be made, according to a new report.

Coch House Nursing Home in Broome, near Stourbridge, was told to improve in five key areas following an inspection by the Care Quality Commission in June last year.

But an unannounced visit by the body in December found the home was only meeting one of the highlighted essential standards, and failing the other four.

A CQC report reveals that inspectors found the home had failed to ensure people received safe and appropriate care that met their needs and rights and that people were not given medicines they needed when they needed them.

Other problem areas related to staff not being probably trained and supervised and a lack of quality checking systems in place.

A spokesman for the home, who did not want to be named, said improvements had been made since the latest inspection.

"We have moved forward since this," he added.

Worcestershire County Council's director of adult and community services, Eddie Clarke, said: "We work closely with, and support, care providers and have processes in place to bring about improvements in services as necessary. The county council is working closely with this provider to bring about the necessary improvements."

Students' rough night

FOUR apprenticeship students will spend a night under the stars as they sleep rough to support the work of the YMCA. Its Sleep Easy takes place between 7pm and 7am in March at Warley Rugby Club, Oldbury.

Halesowen College students Alison Tucker, Emma Ball, Mike Thomas and Matt Parker will be taking part after hearing a talk by a YMCA representative about raising money for youth homelessness.

Singers have the E Factor



Organisers Lesley Gordon and Liz Chater at the Foley Arms in Pedmore

the competition, with singer Dave Singh crowned the winner of the heat. Further heats will take place over the next month, with the final being held at The Hardwick in Streetly on March 23.

During the evening the pub also raised money for Mary Stevens Hospice.

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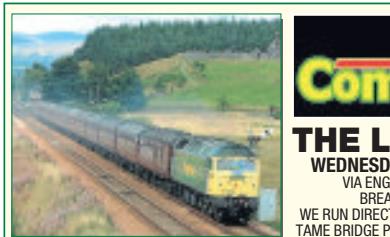
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LETTERS

Gazza not deserving of sympathy

AM I alone in absolutely having no sympathy whatsoever for the self-inflicted plight of Paul "Gazza" Gascoigne.

A once superbly talented footballer, supremely fit, he has degenerated into a shambling alcohol-fuelled wreck, of his own volition.

As is usual in these sad cases, a small army of his former footballing friends have pledged to help him with the cost, of his £9,000 per day rehabilitation, led by Gary Lineker and several other footballers together with DJ Chris Evans.

They have sworn to contribute as

much money as is necessary to get him through the rehab course at the Cottonwood Treatment Centre, Arizona.

I wonder if his old drinking partner, affectionately known as Five Belles, will rush with the same alacrity to Gazza's aid as he did to the bar when Gazza was paying for all they could drink.

I think it was some 30 years ago, when another great football legend was stricken down with cancer, I don't recall the boys clubbing together for Bobby Moore although, to be fair, there wasn't a great deal they could have done in his case. I can only wish

him well, and hope he makes a reasonable recovery, though I fear a complete one is doubtful, as this terrible illness is rarely completely cured.

His worldwide army of fans will consider themselves lucky to have television recordings of his towering talent on the football pitch.

Thanks for that any how Gazza, if only your common sense brain had matched your footballing brain, who knows?

B PARSONS
Millard Road
Coseley

There is no justification for wasting our money

I NOTE the local electorate in Dudley borough have voted overwhelmingly against an increase in council tax levy.

No doubt Dudley's councillors now are looking for areas where savings can be made.

I suggest two. Centres, who make a levy against all of the metropolitan boroughs in the West Midlands could have their precept cut significantly.

They recently wasted thousands changing every bus stop within the county.

The stops which were replaced were perfectly adequate. Then Dudley MBC embarked on a replacement of street name signs across the whole of the borough. In Halesowen they removed perfectly adequate, and readable signs. Can there be any justification for wasting our money in this way?

PETER BRIDGES
Lansdowne Road
Halesowen

LETTERS to the Editor

POST

Halesowen Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial, 51-53
Queen Street, Wolverhampton
WV1 1ES

E-MAIL

Dudley.chrons@
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Parking charges are killing town centres

I HAD to smile on the topic of the demise of town centres. Well you might ask why? Is it because we have to pay a fortune to park?

Some town centres are pedestrianised to keep vehicles out, and a good job they are too. The cost of parking keeps going up every year. Folks like me stop going to town centres. This has a knock-on effect for shop owners, loss of trade, plus if you work in a town centre you too have to pay to park not a very attractive situation to be in to run a business.

People take the soft option and choose shopping malls or supermarkets. Even were you are charged for using a supermarket car park you can get a refund on your shopping bill. It is an epidemic in parking charges. Councils are now in a position where they cannot reverse the charges, due to the revenue it produces, so the rot continues.

Don't councils get the message? My local town is Dudley. I've not shopped there for years. I only go to the town hall.

J ELLIMAN
Balfour Road
Kingswinford

Shopping malls have had their day also

Re: why our town centres are in crisis. The answer was staring out from the page; the one showing the Merry Hill centre with shoppers walking in the dry and bright aisles, the other showing a wet and wind-blown street in Wolverhampton.

There is no contest when you add the free parking with security staff patrolling the car parks, rather than wardens looking to fine anyone who overstays their welcome.

I think we should also face the fact that all is not well for the retail parks either with large areas now empty.

The town centres as we remember have had their day and the days of the ever expanding shopping malls could soon be a memory too.

RON GWILLIAMS
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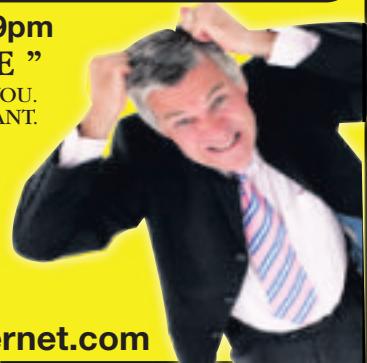
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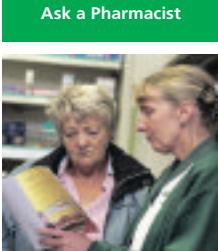
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NEWS**£68,000 budget is set to upgrade crematorium**

THOUSANDS of pounds will be spent on renovation work to upgrade Stourbridge Crematorium.

Dudley Council plans to upgrade the equipment and refurbish the chapel.

The council's cabinet has agreed to set aside a budget of £68,000 for the improvement project at the site off South Road.

A report by chief executive John Polychronakis says: "A number of improvements are that the facility complies with legislative and technical requirement and meets customer expectations."

"Improvement works are proposed to the crematoriums and the catafalque to bring them up to industry standards as well as other improvements to the chapel, which will increase standards of comfort and appearance for visitors."

Stourbridge Crematorium was opened in 1960 within the grounds of Stourbridge Cemetery.

The original chapel dates back more than a hundred years.

In 2010 the crematorium was fitted with a new furnace. Security devices costing £25,000 were also fitted at the site after it was hit by a spate of vandalism and thefts.

Last October, the council completed a £1million scheme to replace outdated monuments at Gornal Wood Cemetery and Crematorium, in Chase Road.

Pub is left empty again

ONCE popular Kinver pub is again without a landlord - after the last one left just a few weeks. Ashton Keating arrived last November after The Vine Inn had been closed for almost a year.

Just before Christmas he departed leaving the Dunsley Road pub empty again. Bob Clarke, of Jenks Avenue, said: "It's really sad to see it like that. It used to be a really popular place."

In January 2010 brothers Mark and Darren Payton reopened it but left just before Christmas 2011 when a water leak closed it.

Slimline buses launched

Councillor Cath Hartley, vice chairman of Centro, and National Express general manager Steve Hale, celebrate investment in new buses, which are part of the service for Russells Hall Hospital

EIGHT new buses connecting a hospital with two town centres have been launched as part of a £1.5 million investment.

The National Express West Midlands buses will operate on the 222 route between Russells Hall Hospital, Dudley, and Brierley Hill.

The slimline vehicles are designed to make manoeuvring around housing estates easier and quicker.

They feature new technology, including announcements to alert passengers with visual and hearing impairments where the bus will be stopping next. The 222 service will

also have distinctive green route branding, making it easier for customers to find and use it when making regular journeys to hospital appointments. The vehicles mark the start of a larger £10 million investment programme between National Express West Midlands and transport authority Centro.

Centro is also installing new shelters and more real-time information displays along the route. The work is being funded from a £10m scheme to improve services in the region. Westfield, owner of Merry Hill shopping centre, has put in £1.5m.

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- may have had a stroke, fit or convulsion
- may have taken an overdose
- has severe burns
- has suspected head or spinal injuries
- has had a severe allergic reaction

Further instructions will be given over the phone by a specially trained call taker and, if appropriate, an ambulance will be sent.

**Take good care this winter**

*Call NHS direct on 0845 46 47 for a list of chemists supplying the 'morning-after' pill without prescription, including to the under 16s.

War memorial book



Guy and Joy Marshall at the Wall Heath war memorial

RESIDENTS in Wall Heath and Kingswinford have been given the chance to see information collected for a project to commemorate war heroes.

A team of volunteers are putting together a book dedicated to the area's men who lost their lives in the world wars.

And an exhibition of information collected so far is on display at the Church of the Ascension church hall, in Dudley Road, Wall Heath.

Book volunteer Joy Marshall said "It is about the Kingswinford and Wall Heath war memorial for the First and Second world wars."

Anyone who can help with the research should contact 07739 572121.

Charity concert cancelled

A CHARITY concert, which would have included songs from West End shows and was due to be staged in Stourbridge has been cancelled because of poor ticket sales.

Performers from Brierley Hill Musical Theatre Company were staging the production, called A Grand Night for Singing.

The show was due to be held at Stourbridge Town Hall, off Market Street, on February 28, starting at 7.30pm.

Organiser Irene Layton MBE, confirmed that the performance had now been cancelled due to "poor ticket sales" for the show.

Emergency crews bill for overtime is around £3m

AMBULANCE staff in the region are clocking up nearly four weeks of overtime a year as demand on the emergency service continues to grow, new figures show.

West Midland Ambulance Service's 4,000 workers recorded a total of 554,705 hours in overtime last year - about 139 hours a year each. The staff get paid one-and-a-half times their hourly rate for the overtime, equating to around £3 million over a year.

More than 90 per cent of the extra hours was shared between clinical workers including paramedics and call centre operators.

The figures, obtained by a Freedom of Information Act request, showed that December and January was by far the busiest time for staff taking overtime.

Chief executive Anthony Marsh said the service has faced an increase in call-outs compared with previous years.

Over the festive period, the service was forced to cancel training of some staff and non-essential meetings.

Help was also sought from St John Ambulance, which is employed on a commercial contract to assist paramedics.

John Hawker, spokesman for the service, said: "Overtime is a necessary part of

working for an emergency service due to the unpredictable nature of the work.

Around 21 per cent of the overtime that took place was in the two busiest months of the year, December and January.

The trust uses overtime to ensure it is able to continue to provide a safe and efficient emergency ambulance service."

He said planned overtime was set up during periods of high demand, during bad weather or to cover sickness.

Ray Salmon, regional organiser for Unison in the West Midlands, said: "The amount of overtime expected gets a mixed reception from staff - some are fed up, some people just see it as part of their job.

"It is one of the most difficult jobs and it sees people working long hours, but people enjoy it for what it

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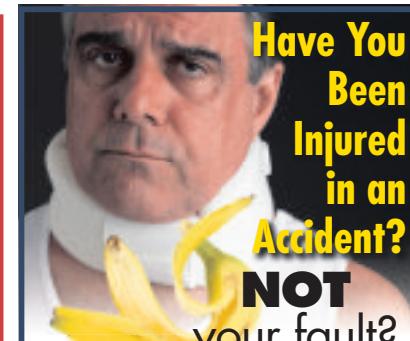
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Securicor guards Harry Pritchard and Jack Ward take possession of electric powered mopeds



Walter Edge on his 1928 Sunbeam



Peter Bidmead passes on his knowledge to youngsters an RAC/ACU motorcycle course

Testament to the two-wheelers



Don Higham sets off for work on his 1925 Royal Enfield in September 1976

PETER Bidmead reckoned he was born with two stroke motorcycle fuel in his blood.

Not only had he a collection of vintage motor bikes, but each day he travelled the 20 miles to his works at Burton-on-Trent on his 20-year-old 1,000cc Ariel Square Four combination.

"I just get a tremendous amount of enjoyment riding a bike. I suppose it's in the blood," said works manager Peter, of Mersey Road, Rugeley, in April 1978.

To pass on his knowledge of bikes, Peter taught youngsters how to ride in an RAC/ACU motorcycle course at Fair Oak School, Rugeley.

Supplying

A search through the archives of the Chronicle's sister paper, the Express & Star, revealed many photographs about people and their two-wheeled modes of transport.

Securicor guards Harry Pritchard and Jack Ward took possession of electric powered mopeds in December 1973, a time of great worry about fuel prices.

A Brierley Hill factory was supplying what were claimed to be the first electric-powered mopeds in Britain. No petrol, no

pollution and virtually noise free – that is the claim for the two-wheeled vehicles made by factory manager Colin Shaw of Solo Power Equipment.

The story said the first hundred mopeds, which could do up to 25 miles before recharging, had already been bought by Securicor.

In 1967 Walter Edge was found outside his home in Hill Avenue, Lanesfield, Wolverhampton, proudly astride his 1928 long-stroke Sunbeam that he used daily.

Don Higham, of Aldridge, was pictured setting off for work on his 1925 Royal Enfield in September 1976. The Walsall recreation department landscape officer had bought it for £30 and spent five years restoring it.

Mark Wells and Paul Handley, both aged 16, were among Wednesbury mods saying "don't blame us" after complaints about motorcycle gangs which were said to be terrorising people on estates in October 1983.

Paul, of Kent Road, Woods estate, said: "It's ridiculous to say our bikes are high speed. My scooter's top speed is only 25mph."



"Don't blame us" – Mark Wells, left, and Paul Handley

by **Toby Neal**

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NEWS

Van gift for charity



Hospice staff Dan Gilbert, Paul Robinson and Simon Henwood celebrate collecting the van from Mike Brown STAFF at Stourbridge's Mary Stevens Hospice celebrated receiving a new van thanks to the backing of a Brierley Hill businessman.

Mike Brown, who owns Dreamland Bedding Centre, in Mill Street, Brierley Hill, has always dug deep to support the hospice. His latest gesture has been to buy a Ford Transit for the hospice to use as part of its house clearance service.

Cash raised through delivery charges paid by his customers has been given to the charity.

Hospice business manager Simon Henwood paid tribute to Mr Brown for his continued support and donations.

Businesses disrupted by a spate of power cuts

CARS were left stranded up on ramps and gym customers stopped in their tracks in a spate of power cuts on a Stourbridge industrial estate.

Businesses on the Mill Race Lane estate, just off Stourbridge ring road, have suffered at least three power cuts—each lasting several hours. Western Power Distribution has apologised to the companies affected and pledged it is doing its best to repair an “intermittent fault” in an underground cable that is causing a sub-station fuse to keep blowing.

But the power company warned there may be further cuts as engineers try to deliberately cause the fuse to blow in an effort to discover the cause of the problem.

“It's been an absolute nightmare,” said Linda Hughes, receptionist at Body Wise gym, where dozens of members have had to be sent home or were unable to start their training sessions due to the loss of power.

“We had members in the gym, the lights all went out and, on Friday morning, we couldn't open our electric shutters because of a power cut the night before.”

Ben Claridge, supervisor at Kwik Fit, said: “We've had vehicles stuck on ramps, and it's cost us business, as well as inconveniencing our customers.”

by Louise Jew

tomers.” Philip Battin, managing director of Tile Trend, said: “The disruption has been enormous—and I am now putting together a claim against Western Power Distribution because it's stopped our business.”

“We haven't even been able to get the roller shutters up on our warehouse to deliver to customers.”

At Kwik Fit, Mr Claridge said: “We had vehicles stuck up on ramps and missed out on quite a lot of business. Customers who needed their vehicles were inconvenienced.”

Mr Claridge and other companies affected had been speculating that work on the town's new Tesco at the Crown Centre could have caused the cuts but Jocelyn Honeywood, spokesman for Western Power Distribution, said: “We do not believe the fault has anything to do with the work on Tesco.”

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NEWS

Council attacks figures on town's empty shops

FIGURES claiming Dudley has the highest rate of empty shops of any medium-sized town in the country, have been dismissed as "inaccurate".

The number of empty shops is 32.4 per cent, three per cent worse than last year, almost a third of its stores, according to a new survey.

The recession, the popularity of online shopping and convenience of out-of-town centres have all been blamed for empty shops. But Dudley Council hit out at the figures from the Local Data Company saying they were inaccurate.

The authority said, based on its own figures, the rate of empty shops in Dudley was actually 18 per cent.

The council claims the Local Data Company figures were based on out-of-date boundaries and failed to take into account traders closed the day of the survey.

Deputy council leader Councillor Shaukat Ali, said: "We know our town, we know where its heart lies and we are committed to do more for our town by attracting new business and supporting existing ones."

"The inaccurate LDC figures, based on out-of-date boundaries and flawed methodology could be disheartening, but I know that in truth our town centre vacancy rate is lower than quoted." Councillor Ali said the council was launching a £1m Business Loan Fund, with £500,000 match funding from the council, and a £250,000 pot of money for social enterprises to bid for funding.

Jail term for phone theft

A MAN has been given a suspended sentence for stealing a woman's mobile phone at Dudley Bus Station. Philip Hindmarsh, aged 24, of New Street, Dudley admitted robbing the woman at Dudley bus station at 11.30pm on November 13. At Wolverhampton Crown Court he was given a year's jail, suspended for two years, a four-month curfew, 18 months supervision and he must pay £300 compensation with £80 victim surcharge.

Picking up the prayers



Priest Paul Harrison, the Bishop of Dudley the Rt Rev David Walker and Reverend Diane Cooksey collect prayers for Lent

THE Bishop of Dudley was out in Stourbridge meeting shoppers and collecting prayers.

The Rt Rev David Walker chatted to shoppers and asked for written prayer requests in the town centre.

Senior church leaders toured the area to mark Ash Wednesday and also stopped in Bromsgrove and Worcester.

The Bishop said: "We know that people really appreciate somebody offering to say a prayer for them. In the past we have collected over 120 prayer requests in two hours in one location.

"We'll be collecting prayers for

whatever concerns the people we meet and we believe that prayer can make a real difference."

The scheme called Pray One for Me is a national initiative inspired by the Bishop of Worcester. On Ash Wednesday 2009, Bishop John collected prayers outside the Job Centre in Redditch.

The aim was to help those who had been most badly affected by the economic downturn.

In 2010 it became a national initiative and on February 22 many bishops in the Church of England will be collecting prayer requests in towns and cities across the country.

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NEWS

Hall murals will honour famous sons from town

MURALS honouring two of Halesowen's most famous sons will be painted in the town's Cornbow Hall.

They will pay tribute to poet William Shenstone, who designed The Leasowes Park, and novelist Francis Brett Young.

Dudley artist Steve Field has been asked to design a two-part mural for the main activity room at the hall.

It will be unveiled in 2014 – a significant anniversary year for both of the writers.

An art gallery will also be created in the theatre foyers as part of the work and will be used by local artists and art groups.

Councillor David Vickers, who represents Halesowen South, has welcomed the project.

"There are very important people in Halesowen's history. Next year will be the 300th anniversary of William Shenstone's birth and the 130th anniversary of the birth of Francis Brett Young and also the 60th anniversary of his death."

"Cornbow Hall is the best used hall in the borough. There are 70 different groups which meet there so the artwork will be seen by a lot of people."

"The art gallery will also be in demand and it's a great way to recognise the achievements of both men."

Funding for the work has come from a Section 106 agreement, which developers agree to pay to the council for public artwork as a condition of planning permission.

It is estimated £6,000 will be spent on each mural including materials and installation. Brett Young set much of his work in local areas such as Halesowen, Dudley and Birmingham.

Songs from the shows

HAGLEY Theatre Group is presenting Anything Can Happen at the community centre on March 1 and 2. The performance will include songs by the adult and youth sections from stage and film musicals. Tickets cost £8, with £6 concessions, and are available from Paddocks Butchers or by phoning 07907 457217.

Trainee books her study



Dudley Zoo trainee keeper Johanna Turner and Dr David Beeston

A TRAINEE keeper at Dudley Zoo is looking to boost her knowledge of animal care on a two-year study diploma. Johanna Turner is studying management of zoo and aquarium animals alongside her work at the zoo. The 21-year-old will continue her studies at Sparsholt College, Hampshire. Dr David Beeston, Dudley Zoo's registrar and research co-ordinator, supports the training for zoo keepers.

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Passionate gardener, author and TV presenter Alys Fowler is among the latest recruits to one of the biggest garden shows in the Midlands DANNY FARRAGHER caught up with her while she was cycling home

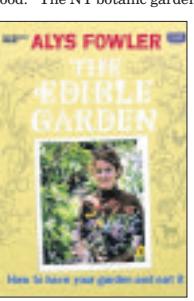
ADOPTED Midlander Alys Fowler was almost predestined to spend her working life growing, eating or talking about gardening in general and vegetables in particular. During her childhood in Silchester, Hampshire she was inspired by her mother who lived the good life.

"It all started when I was a kid, my mum is just an amazing gardener so it was a natural progression I suppose. I grew up in the garden with her and by the time I was 16 I just thought I would go off and train as a horticulturist. It has never occurred to me to do anything else."

Alys, now aged 34, trained at Wisley, the RHS head training ground in Surrey. From there she moved across the pond to the New York Botanic Gardens and then went on to do a three year diploma at Kew gardens topping it all off with a masters. It was while living and studying in the Big Apple, the author and TV presenter became involved in a movement which allowed locals to grow their own plants and food. "The NY botanic gardens are in the Bronx and I lived in the lower east side of Manhattan where all the community gardens are famously based."

"The one I worked on didn't grow food, you just have to imagine if you live in lower Manhattan there is one tiny park and nobody has any garden, so when you have no community space whatsoever you have to join a community garden. So it was more out of necessity they were born."

This adapting to your surroundings is a something Alys believes in deeply and has spent a great deal of time and energy writing about



Alys is a successful author

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Short-term care to attend to someone that has been discharged from a hospital and requires care during healing. Long-term support and friendship for someone who is beginning to struggle with living by themselves, but who doesn't want to be forced into move to a nursing home.



Expert Alys Fowler has a passion for vegetables

her experience in her Guardian newspaper column and through several books.

"I live in the city, in south Birmingham so it kind of makes sense to talk and write about the thing you are doing which is living in a terraced house in a typical street, with a typical back garden and then try to fulfil my smallholding dreams in the city."

Just like her garden, Alys seems to have been planted where she could blossom and while she speaks of the Second City, which has become her home, with great affection it wasn't her original intention to become an "honorary" Brummie.

"I ended up in the midlands by mistake, but I liked it so

much I stayed. I came up for a job at BBC Birmingham and I thought I would come for six months max. I told everyone don't worry I'm only going to Birmingham for six months but six months turned into seven months, turned into eight months, turned into six years. I love Birmingham, I think it's an amazing city. It's a bit of a hidden gem which I know most people don't go around saying that about Birmingham. It's got a really astonishing outlook as a city in that there's a really good strong sense of community, people are really friendly; people are really open."

"The thing about Birmingham is it's quite a spread out city. There are a lot of allotments, and so many people have their own back gardens. I suppose the issue here is really to get people to utilise their own back gardens rather than create community spaces, because if you get on a train from the city centre and head out you will see 101 back gardens with nothing more than a trampoline or a chair in them."

"So I think there's a resource there that can always be used, it's not necessarily always about creating new spaces."

Enjoyable

Alys also wants everyone to get to know the obvious profits of growing your own as well as the knock-on health benefits.

"I think it's an amazingly, enjoyable thing to grow your own food. You get really healthy - probably organic, if you choose to go down that road - food at a reasonably good price. You put in a lot of hours to get it. It's not like it's 'free', you have to work really hard but while you're working really hard, you are outside enjoying nature, getting fit, doing something that's genuinely pleasurable."

"Growing food is a really lovely thing to do and you get to meet other people who are like-minded."

Her enthusiasm for what she does is infectious and she wants to pass on that passion to others.

"I have never met someone who once they have got bitten by the bug has turned around and gone 'nah I don't get this'. You have that one early success, maybe it's growing a basil plant, or you chuck a potato in the ground and eight weeks later you get 10. Whatever it is you get that tiny, early success and you just get bitten and you get it, and I guess it's getting people to have a go at that early success that really matters." Now Alys is among the newest recruits to one of the biggest and fastest growing horticultural shows around, the Edible Garden Show which is now in its third



Alys is one of the newest recruits to the show

year and dedicated to the very practises she is so passionate about.

"There have been a lot of horticultural shows but they haven't really been aimed at the ordinary grower, they tend to be old school, show your big veg type shows or they've been like Chelsea which aimed at really a different kind of gardening. So it's really exciting to go to a show where there are so many different things, products to learn about and people to hear talk and meet your fellow growers."

"You spend all your time on your allotment working and so there is this time in the year where you can get to meet someone else."

Alys will be there over the three days giving two talks a day on growing vegetables but her basic advice to anyone thinking of getting the gardening bug is simple.

"Start small and grow with your garden, don't try to dig up the whole place. Do it bit by bit and learn to grow with the space. The number one rule with designing is you have to make sure your plants fit the space, or else you are on a ride to nowhere. That's what kind of hard to dissuade people, they have a nice idea in their head that they want roses and jasmine and whatnot and they've got completely the wrong space for that."

"Once you learn to love your soil and learn to love it for what it is and not try and change it like some bad boyfriend, you can find you can grow all sorts of good things."

Alys will be giving advice, tips and information along with a host of other experts at The Edible Garden Show, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire from March 15-17.

For more information about the show visit www.theediblegardenshow.co.uk.



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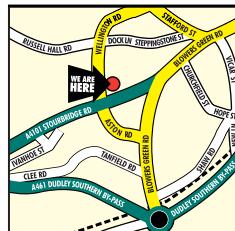
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NEWS

Families will struggle for the next decade warning

MILLIONS of families might not see a return to pre-recession standards of living for another decade, a think-tank has warned.

The Resolution Foundation said many low-to-middle-income households would never fully recover the ground they lost because of the prolonged economic downturn.

Even if typical earnings for such families were to rise by 1.1 per cent a year, the report calculated that would take until 2023 before they recovered to £22,000 a year at current prices – the equivalent of where they stood in real terms in 2008.

Without the prolonged downturn, the report estimated that typical earnings could now be expected to stand at £27,500 a year.

However, to reach that level over the next decade would require real terms growth of 3.3 per cent-a-year – a figure the report described as “unattainable” based on current forecasts and past experience.

The report defines low and middle income households as being of working age and relying primarily on their own earned resources but with incomes below the median for the UK.

In practice, it means couples without children living on a joint income of between £12,000 and £30,000 or between £17,000 and £41,000 for a couple with two children.

On average this group has seen a 2.4 per cent cut in real incomes since 2009-10, and the report calculated that it would now take 22 years for such households to save for an average deposit on a first time buyer property.

Topping out ceremony

A TOPPING out ceremony has been held in the development of a £18 million leisure and health centre in Sandwell. The ceremony was held last week at the site of Portway Lifestyle Centre in Oldbury. The venue will bring together leisure, health and social care under one roof. It will offer people access to sport, leisure and health facilities.

Celebrating with a beer



With Jerry Hedges are left, head brewer Tony Garrington, fellow director Peter Isherwood and The Cat Inn landlady Aimee Hicks

A BREWERY has produced a celebratory beer to mark its 20th birthday. Envile Ales Ltd launched Kasitra, the name of which comes from the two types of hop used, Cascade and Citra, this week at The Cat Inn, Bridgnorth Road. Director Jerry Hedges, said he had been keen to brew a lower strength beer, because it meant the duty was lower.

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Going crazy for golf



Lily-May Wooldridge and Heike Palmer, both seven, enjoy the new crazy golf course at Quest, Merry Hill

SCHOOLCHILDREN joined a crazy golf champion to launch Merry Hill shopping centre's indoor urban golf course.

The nine-hole adventure course at the Dudley mall was opened by youngsters from St James's Primary School, Wollaston, Stourbridge, and Chris Harding just in time for the school half-term.

Launching at the same time is Quest's rope course designed for children under seven. There is already an aerial ropes course for adults at one corner of the centre, which at 55ft is the highest anywhere in Europe.

Mark Knox, manager at Quest Merry Hill, said: "The Quest adventure golf course and Sky Tykes ropes are perfect for parents looking to do something a little different with the kids this February half term."

"We're looking forward to seeing how many daredevils we have trying out our course over the school holiday."

Quest operators, Paragon Entertainment have also built a Nerf blaster indoor zone outside the centre, on the site of the now removed ice rink.

So far, 30 jobs have been created at the site, which will cost £1.2million once completed. Meanwhile, staff at Merry Hill will be offering a host of half-term activities, including Bob the Builder and Katy Ashworth from the Cbeebies I Can Cook show.

Mother dies from injuries suffered in fall off horse

A MOTHER-of-two died of head injuries after falling from a horse, an inquest heard.

Sedgley hairdresser Sharon Dodd, aged 39, was riding a friend's horse along a track behind Himley Cricket Club when she lost control of her mount. She fell from the horse, called Max, and suffered a serious head injury, despite wearing a well-fitted helmet. At Cannock Coroner's Court, South Staffordshire Coroner Andrew Haigh ruled her death had been a tragic accident, as devastated relatives paid tributes.

Mr Haigh ruled the main factor behind her fall was losing control of the horse. However, a loose stirrup and a knee problem she suffered with had also contributed, he added.

After the inquest, Mrs Dodd's husband Andrew, aged 42, said: "Her death devastated everyone who knew her. It was so tragic she died from doing something she loved."

The couple lived together in Waterdale, Wombourne, and had two sons Ben, aged 19, and Max, seven.

Mrs Dodd, who worked at Sarah Clarke Hair and Beauty Studio, Sedgley, spent four days in intensive care at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham but died during surgery to relieve pressure to her head on November 22.

by Alex Ross

Mr Dodd added: "Sharon was very popular and much loved. She was a fun-loving woman who was very family orientated."

"It's coming up to three months since she died, and it seems to have gone on for ever. It's been so hard, not just for me, but for her sons too. Christmas just was not the same."

"Now we have the challenge of moving on, the inquest has offered us closure on the matter."

Detective Constable Adam Yates, who led the police investigation following Mrs Dodd's death, told the hearing she had rode the horse after meeting his owner at stables in Himley with a view to helping her look after the animal.

After riding the horse in the menage under the observation of the owner, she started walking the horse along a track back to its field.

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WI guest proves a glass act

BILBROOK WI

FOLLOWING the usual business, president Julie Hammersley introduced the speaker for the February meeting, Cas Bailey.

Cas had visited before to talk about her life during her 32 years in the police force. This talk, "Cuffs to Glass", was about what came after she had retired.

Looking for something completely different and challenging to do she noticed a magazine advert for a 12-month course in glass techniques at Dudley College.

Classes were held in a disused glass factory in Brierley Hill. There were 12 students in her class ranging in age from their 20s to 60s.

Cas enjoyed her time there so much that she enrolled and completed a second year course.

After two years at college, Cas rented a studio workshop and started a small business. When the studio was sold, Cas had to look for new premises. She bought a new house and had a log house built in the garden for a workshop.

Cas explained the various techniques and brought some beautiful samples of her work. She can now be found selling her creations and taking commissions at Shugborough on crafts days.

Win Poulton gave a vote of thanks and to evening was rounded off with the raffle and refreshments.

The AGM will be on Tuesday, March 12 at the village hall, Joey's Lane at 7.30pm.



Historian Ned Williams addressed the meeting

Perils of public speaking

THE February meeting was opened by chairman Brenda White, who conducted the business.

Due to the closure of Mellish Townswomen's Guild, some of their members joined with the Central Guild who were very

WALSALL
CENTRAL TG

happy to welcome them. Speaker for the evening was Pamela Wheat, who gave an interesting talk on the "Perils of Public Speaking".

The next date for members will be the Annual General Meeting, taking place at 7pm on Tuesday, March 5 in the Mellish Room at Central Hall Methodist Church, Walsall. This will include a bring and buy sale.

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CLUB NEWS

Historian gives reel insight into cinemas

THE BLACK COUNTRY SOCIETY

THE Kingswinford branch of the Black Country Society met at St Mary's Church Hall on January 16 when historian Ned Williams was the speaker. He is a member and past president of the society.

Ned was born in Ilford, Essex but has lived in the Black Country since 1962. He taught at Wulfrun College for 30 years and then for 10 years with the Workers Educational Association.

A prolific writer, he now has 48 books to his name, the most recent ones being Black Country Cinemas and Black Country Theatres. His illustrated talk was of cinemas and entertainment in the Black Country. He gave a fascinating talk about cinemas no longer with us and explained that the buildings are often now used for other purposes such as bingo halls and warehouses. Many of them still retain the art deco styles inside.

He spoke about theatres including the now defunct Dudley Hippodrome. Ned also talked about early travelling players, circuses and fairgrounds and famous people who ran them events - Pat Collins being one.

The chairman thanked Ned for his talk and coffee was served.

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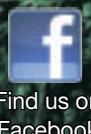
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NEWS



Orla Fielder from Castlefields, who has won a Little Star award for her fight with leukaemia. Her mum Becky holds the certificate her daughter received from Cancer Research UK for her bravery

Brave Orla, 10, proves she's an absolute star

by Marion Brennan

WHEN Orla Fielder's parents broke the news that she had leukaemia, the youngster told them: "Don't worry, at least it's nothing very bad like cancer."

The 10-year-old's response was touchingly naive but it also hinted at a determination not to be beaten by the disease that has inevitably forced huge changes in her young life.

Mum Becky, aged 41, said: "She's been brilliant. I quickly told her she would lose her hair and she was obviously very upset. She used to have really long hair but we had it cut into a bob and donated the rest to the Little Princess Trust charity, which provides real-hair wigs for children undergoing chemotherapy treatment.

Arthritis

"She's got a wig but I think she looks lovely without it. She tends to wear a scarf for school, although she hasn't been able to go since last November."

Orla's bravery in facing up to the disease has prompted her parents to nominate her in the Little Star awards run nationally by Cancer Research UK.

As a result the youngster, who lives with her family in Thomas Avenue, Castlefields, Stafford, was a joint winner in her category.

Becky recalls how quickly Orla was struck down by the life-threatening condition last summer, two weeks before her 10th birthday.

On Thursday, July 5, she was a carefree pupil at Penkridge Middle School. By the afternoon of Sunday, July 8, she was a patient on the oncology ward at Birmingham Children's Hospital.

"It happened very suddenly," said Becky. "She was complaining of severe joint pain so I took her to the GP who thought it was reactive arthritis.

"Orla had blood tests but that night she was in agony. She was admitted to Stafford Hospital on Saturday evening but transferred to Birmingham by ambulance. The doctors there diagnosed Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia but needed to do bone marrow tests to be certain. It was all a blur."

The good news was that Orla's condition was treatable. The bad news was that the road to recovery would last two long years.

Seven months into the programme, the youngster has been "up and down." She has a permanent Hickman line to her chest through which blood is taken and chemotherapy is given.



A typical little girl growing up, but over the last few months Orla has faced tough challenges

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Vulnerability

She has recently finished her latest round of chemotherapy which also involved lumbar punctures to get the chemicals into her spinal fluid.

Teachers and pupils made a huge fuss of her when she briefly went back to school in October but because of the treatment and her vulnerability to picking up bugs, she has not returned.

At home, dad Roland, a 41-year-old engineer, sister Georgina, aged 17, brother Jack, 15, and Becky, who has a franchise running baby sensory classes, do their best to keep her occupied but she misses certain activities, like her dance classes.

The muscle wastage in her legs meant that for four weeks she could not even walk upstairs.

But during a break in her chemotherapy treatment last November, Orla took in her dance school's production of Alice in Wonderland, although her health meant her involvement was limited to sitting on stage in character.

Since then she has launched a Just Giving page to raise funds for the cancer ward at Birmingham Children's Hospital, raising £2,000 so far.

Becky says: "She's really strong and has got a really good sense of humour."

"Obviously she's down some days and misses her friends and would love it if her life was as before, but she doesn't complain."

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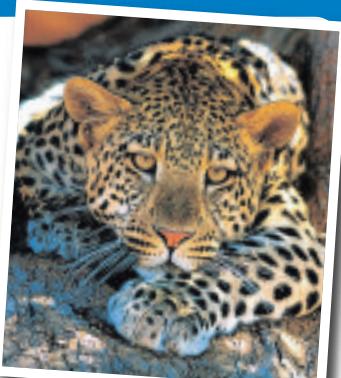
South Africa is a country five times the size of Britain and it has so much to offer the visitor, including breath-taking wildlife, stunning scenery, a huge sense of history, bustling cities plus first class food and wine.

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For most visitors the highlight will be a full day's game drive that brings the chance to see the sweeping savannah and muddy waterholes lined with animals, and to marvel at the incredible 150 mammal and 500 bird species that live in the Kruger National Park, including the 'big five': elephant, lion, rhino, leopard and buffalo. Rooms are reserved at the three-star superior Hippo Hollow Country Estate, located in the midst of lush forest on the banks of the Sabie River. It's open-air terrace overlooks the grounds and river, so watch out for the hippos!

Those interested in history will be intrigued by the visit to Zululand, passing through Swaziland en route, to reach the haunting battlefields of Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift. In 1879 these two battles, just a day apart, became a defining moment for the British Empire and the specialist Zulu guide will make those desperate encounters come alive.

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What's On! Halesowen

Testament to the success of Joseph Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, The Grand, W-ton
GO JOSEPH... there just seems no stopping the theatrical juggernaut this Old Testament pop musical has become.

First conceived by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber more than 40 years ago, its popularity does not decline and it could lay claim to being the nation's favourite musical.

This latest touring production from Bill Kenwright goes all out to please, the songs come slick and fast - mostly parodies from country music to Elvis Presley and Parisian chanson - delivered by an energetic cast.

It tells the Book of Genesis tale of how favourite son Joseph is sold into slavery by his 11 jealous brothers, ends up in Egypt where, after a spell in jail, he becomes the pharaoh's right hand man and is finally reconciled with those sinful siblings and reuniting with his father.

Keith Jack, runner-up in the TV search for Joseph, is a charismatic leading man with a smile that lit up the theatre and delivered his big number, Any Dream Will Do, at least three times. He had excellent support from Lauren Ingram as the Narrator.

The night ended with a crowd-pleasing Joseph megamix for which the Grand audience were encouraged to get out of their seats and dance.

Leon Burakowski

Glamorous home town role as Sophie joins High Society

THE GLITZY world of American 'High Society' in the 1940s will be brought to the stage at Wolverhampton Grand next week.

Among performers preparing for curtain-up on the musical is Sophie Bould, a former member of South Staffs Musical Theatre Company who is now a professional actor.

The former pupil of St Dominic's School, in Brewood, previously wowed West End audiences playing Liesl in The Sound of Music after first walking the boards at the Grand.

Now aged 31, she said: "I was eight when the theatre company were performing South Pacific and they needed a youngster to play a little French girl.

My mum Veronica was with the company. I was at the Grand Theatre for a week and I was bitten by the bug."

Sinatra

Well Did You Evah and True Love are two of the most famous songs from High Society, which will feature Sophie alongside Daniel Boys and former Robin of Sherwood Michael Praed.

The Cole Porter musical was a 1956 film with Grace Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby and Louis Armstrong. That was itself based on play The Philadelphia Story, made into a 1940 film with Katherine Hepburn, Cary Grant and James Stewart.

High Society is at the Grand Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday, then at Birmingham Hippodrome from May 14 to 18.



Sophie Bould with Daniel Boys in the Cole Porter musical High Society



Acrobatic action at The Moscow State Circus, coming to Wolverhampton Civic Hall

Circus and Disney fun

ICONS of Russian and American popular culture are coming to the West Midlands to entertain families.

Disney On Ice returned to Birmingham's LG Arena yesterday (Wednesday) for a five-day run of their new extravaganza Let's Party.

A medley of festivals from around the world, it is hosted by Mickey and Minnie Mouse and features favourites from such movies as Lilo & Stitch and Toy Story, plus an array of Disney Princesses and Villains.

Legend

Then next week the Moscow State Circus rolls into Wolverhampton, swapping a big top for the Civic Hall on Tuesday and Wednesday, February 26 and 27, for a show based on a Russian legend.

Babushkin Sekret concerns a search for a chair containing treasure. The story will involve performances by high-wire artists, acrobats, jugglers and clowns.

Love ballads and Valentine lingerie

Nerina Pallot
Glee Club, Birmingham
IN between regaling the packed Glee Club audience with opinions of dodgy Valentine lingerie and Sharon Osbourne's plastic surgery, Brit Award-nominated singer/songwriter Nerina Pallot entertained her fans with the last leg of her Lonely Valentine tour.

She opened on the baby grand piano with a soft ballad, her clear voice sounding not unlike Katie Melua but with a harder edge. Moving into Driving to Idaho she exuded a rich sound which began to show the range of her voice.

Pallot kept with the ballads through All Bets Are Off which was a more soulful song telling of disastrous love which fitted in with the theme of the tour. She tried out one of her new songs, Once, before clomping across the stage in her crimson 50s-style dress to pick up her acoustic guitar.

She was interrupted by her husband letting her know their baby son, who was ill, was now alright and as she tried to move into her next song her emotions got the better of her and she broke down in tears of relief.

The plucky Pallot was soon back on track and quickly moved into more of her repertoire including Mr King, Real Late Starter, Turn Me On Again and even at one stage allowed the audience to throw in a request.

Danny Farragher

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What's On!

SATURDAY'S TV 23.02.13

Listings supplied by Press Association

CHOICE



Sunetra Sarker

Casualty

BBC1, 8.40pm

Last week we met estranged couple David and Kate. When we catch up with them here, he struggles to keep his temper in check after their son Nathan is rushed to the ED after collapsing while on a day out with Kate. The fact that Kate then announces she wants access to their son, coupled with bad news about the youngster's future treatment, stuns David so much, he decides to do something very foolish indeed. Meanwhile, Zoe returns, goes berserk at Ash and then offers him a permanent job. Also starring Patrick Robinson.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast, **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live, **11.30** Nigella's Simple Cooking, **(R) 12.00** BBC News, **16.00** National Weather, **12.15** Football Focus, **1.00** Bargain Hunt, **2.00** Live Six Nations Rugby Union, **4.20** BBC News: Regional News; Weather, **4.30** Live Six Nations Rugby Union, **5.00** France (Kick-off 5.00pm).

7.00 **Let's Dance for Comic Relief**, Steve Jones and Alex Jones host the final heat of the contest, featuring Jon Culshaw, Antony Cotton, members of the cast of Waterloo Road, Kim Woodburn and Rosemary Shrager.

8.25 **The National Lottery Saturday Night Draws**. New series, OJ Borg presents as the balls are drawn to decide the all-important numbers, including the Lotto, Thunderball and Lotto Plus draws.

8.40 **Casualty**, Zoë returns from sick leave and clashes with Ash, Jeff must persuade a man to act in his son's best interest as he is determined to help an elderly gentleman in love.

9.30 **Mrs Brown's Boys**, Agnes and the Brown family await the fruits of their fraud after faking Grandad's death to get a payout, but the insurance company starts to grow suspicious. (R)

10.00 BBC News; Weather.

10.20 **Match of the Day**, Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches; National Lottery Update.

11.40 **The Football League Show**.

12.55 Weatherview. **1.00** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Close, **7.30** Great British Menu, **(R) 8.00** Great British Menu, **(R) 8.30** Great British Menu, **(R) 9.00** Great British Menu, **(R) 10.00** A Great British Menu, **(R) 11.30** History of Britain by Simon Schama, **(R) 11.00** Meet the Ancestors, **(R) 11.30** Map Man, **(R) 12.00** Indian Food Made Easy, **(R) 12.30** MasterChef, **(R) 1.30** Talking Pictures, **1.25** Film: The Black Shield of Falworth, **(1954) 3.50** Coast, **4.00** Flog It!, **4.30** Final Score, **5.15** Live Cycling: World Track Championships.

7.00 **Top Gear**, Jeremy Clarkson puts the new Kia Ceed to the test, including road test, Richard Hammond drives the Mastretta MXT, and three high-performance hatchbacks are tested on the track. (R)

8.00 **Dad's Army**, The platoon has a steam engine problem. (R)

8.30 **A Wolf Called Storm: Natural World Special**: Cameraman follows a wolf for a year following the lives of a wolf and its pack in the north of Canada, learning how the animals survive in the harsh wilderness. (R)

9.30 **Howard Goodall's Story of Music**, The composer examines the ways in which modern technology and methods of recorded sound in the late 19th century changed the way music was played, heard and distributed.

10.30 **Funny Business**, Comedians who work on cruise ships. Last in the series.

11.30 **Film: The Men Who Stare at Goats**, (2009) Satirical comedy, starring George Clooney and Ewan McGregor.

12.55 Close.

ITV

6.00 C1TV: **Handy Manny**, **6.10** Handi Manny, **6.20** Handi Man, **(R) 6.35** The Hive, **(R) 6.45** Dino Dan, **7.00** Dino Dan, **(R) 7.10** Camimals, **(R) 7.20** Camimals, **(R) 7.25** Bookaboo, **7.40** Matt Hatter Chronicles, **8.05** Kick Buttowski – Suburban Daredevil, **8.15** Kick Buttowski – Suburban Daredevil, **8.30** The Mystery of the Missing Jessie, **9.25** ITV News, **9.30** The Jockey Kyle Show USA, **10.25** My Tasty Travels with Lynda Bellingham, **(R) 11.25** Dinner Date, **12.25** Countrywise, **12.40** ITV News; Weather, **12.45** Film: Carry On Up The Jungle, **(1970) 2.30** The Chase: Celeb Special, **2.30** **Midsummer Murders**, **(R) 5.30** Regional Programme: Weather, **5.45** ITV News; Weather.

6.00 **Totally You've Been Framed**, Harry Hill narrates a review of the show's most comical clips, featuring amazing accidents, cute kids and the greatest guest of Queen Victoria who turned her back on royal life to work with the poor in Greece. (R)

7.00 **Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway**, New series. The Geordie duo's entertainment show returns, featuring a performance by Robbie Williams in the first edition. Danny DeVito is in the voiceover. (R)

8.20 **Take Me Out**, A rugby player, a student, a morris dancer and a security adviser enter the love lift in the hope of impressing 30 single women. Paddy McGuinness presents. Last in the series.

9.50 **The Jonathan Ross Show**, Celebrity interviews.

10.50 ITV News; Weather.

11.05 **Film: The Gauntlet**, (1977) Action adventure, starring Chuck Norris and Wesley Snipes.

1.05 **Jackpot247**, **3.00** In Plain Sight, **(R) 3.45** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.05 **Sali Mali**, **(R) 6.10** **The Hoobs**, **(R) 6.35** The Hoobs, **(R) 7.00** **Will & Grace**, **(R) 7.25** **Freelancers** on 4, **7.35** **The Moonlighters**, **(R) 7.45** **Everybody Loves Raymond**, **(R) 8.00** **Everybody Loves Raymond**, **(R) 8.15** Kick Buttowski – Suburban Daredevil, **8.30** **Secrets of the Castle**, **9.25** **ITV News**, **9.30** **The Jockey Kyle Show USA**, **10.25** **My Tasty Travels with Lynda Bellingham**, **(R) 11.25** **Dinner Date**, **12.25** **Countrywise**, **12.40** **TV News**; Weather, **12.45** **Big Bang Theory**, **(R) 11.45** **The Simpsons**, **(R) 12.10** **The Simpsons**, **(R) 12.40** **Secrets of the Castle**, **(R) 1.00** **Channel 4 Racing**, **4.05** **Come Dine with Me**, **(R) 5.05** **Come Dine with Me**, **(R) 5.40** **Come Dine with Me**, **(R) 6.10** **Come Dine with Me**, **Rose Proenca** hosts the final dinner party in Portsmouth. (R)

6.40 **Channel 4 News**.

6.55 **4Thought.tv**.

7.00 **The Queen's Mother in Law**, The story of Prince Philip's mother Princess Alice, a great-great-grandmother of Queen Victoria who turned her back on royal life to work with the poor in Greece. (R)

8.00 **Kevin McCloud's Man Made Home**, The Grand Designs presenter builds an oak-framed cabin using recycled materials, aiming to create a retreat where he can get away from the rat race. (R)

9.00 **Film: The Trial of S.O.S. Salvation**, (2009) In the future, resistance fighter John Connor leads a war against the deadly robots that have taken over the world. Sci-fi thriller sequel, with Christian Bale and Sam Worthington.

11.10 **Film: Rising Sun**, (1993) Thriller, starring Sean Connery and Wesley Snipes.

1.35 **Southland**, **2.15** **Holyoaks**, **(R) 4.20** **Deal or No Deal**, **(R) 5.15** **Countdown**, **(R)**

CHANNEL 5

6.00 **Milkshake**, **10.00** **Power Rangers Sam & Cat**, **(R) 6.35** **Brave and the Bold**, **7.10** **Looney Tunes**, **(R) 11.20** **Looney Tunes**, **(R) 11.25** **Monkey Life**, **(R) 11.55** **Police Interceptors**, **(R) 12.55** **Film: I Dream of Murder**, **(2006) 2.45** **Film: Corrina, Corrina**, **(1994) 4.55** **5 News Weekend**, **5.00** **Film: The Hobbit: Ransom for a Dead Man**, **(1971) 6.55** **CSI: NY**, Mac tells Flack about the persistent anonymous calls he is receiving, and the team investigates a string of audacious robberies carried out by crooks equipped with high-tech gadgets. (R)

7.40 **NCIS**, **NCIS** is attacked by a knife-wielding woman who accuses him of war crimes, alleging he tortured and killed her brother in Afghanistan in the early 1980s. Starring David McCallum. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 **Merlin**, **7.45** **Doctor Who**, **8.35** **Film: National Treasure: Book of Secrets**, **(2004) 10.30** **World's Greatest Tools**, **11.00** **Family Guy**, **11.45** **American Dad!**

BBC Four

7.00 **Britain's Natural World**, **8.00** **Baroque From St Peter's to St Paul's**, **9.00** **Spiral 4: State of Terror**, **10.45** **The Joy of the Single**, **11.45** **Country at the BBC**

ITV2

3.35 **Film: Toy Story 2** (1999) **5.30** **Film: Mr Bean's Holiday** (2007)

7.20 **Film: Jurassic Park** (1993)

9.30 **Take Me Out** – **The Gossip**

10.50 **Fake Reaction** **11.40** **Film: Gremlins** (1984)

ITV3

1.55 **Film: A Touch of Frost**, **4.00** **Film: Come On Darling**, **5.30** **Agatha Christie's Marple**, **5.55** **Rosemary & Thyme**, **9.00** **Midsummer Murders**, **11.00** **Film: The Pianist** (2002)

ITV4

3.10 **Film: The Upturned Glass** (1947) **5.00** **Film: Invitation to a Gunfighter** (1964) **7.00** **IT Legends**, **7.30** **GT Academy**, **8.00** **The Sweeney**, **9.00** **River Monsters**: Lethal Legends **10.00** **Film: Raging Bull** (2002)

4

3.35 **Rules of Engagement** **6.00** **Film: The Big Bang Theory**, **7.00** **Happy Endings**, **8.00** **How I Met Your Mother**, **8.30** **2 Broke Girls**, **9.00** **Film: Beverly Hills Cop II** (1987) **11.05** **The Big Bang Theory**

Film4

2.50 **Speed 2: Cruise Control** (1997) **5.10** **Nacho Libre** (2006)

6.55 **America's Sweethearts** (2001)

9.00 **The Runaways** (2010)

Premiere: Biopic of the 1970s rock band, starring Kristen Stewart and Dakota Fanning. **11.05** **Dog Soldiers** (2002)

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SUNDAY'S TV 24.02.13

CHOICE



Yotam Ottolenghi

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 7.35 Match of the Day. (R) 9.00 The Andrew Marr Show. 10.00 The Big Questions. 11.00 Countryfile. (R) 11.55 Weather for the Week Ahead. 12.00 BBC News. 12.05 Bargain Hunt. 12.30 Call the Midwife. (R) 1.30 Live Sport. National Rugby Union. 4.00 Escape to the Country. 4.30 Songs of Praise. 5.05 Penguins – Spy in the Huddle. (R)

6.05 Deadly 60 on a Mission. New series. Steve Backshall continues his quest to encounter the world's 60 deadliest animals, heading to South Africa in search of great white sharks, cheetahs and venomous snakes. Weather.

6.35 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

7.00 Countryfile; Matt Baker and Julia Bradbury explore Bristol, Tom Head investigates issues associated with illegally produced meat and Adam Henson finds out how a breed of cow is being preserved. Including Weather for the Week Ahead.

8.00 Call the Midwife. Jenny tries to reconcile a dying man with his only remaining daughter, while Dr Turner and the midwives carry out a mass screening for tuberculosis in Poplar.

9.00 Ripper Street. Jackson is accused of being the Ripper and faces the death penalty, while Reid investigates the suspected kidnapping of Rose. Last in the series.

10.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

10.25 Match of the Day 2.

11.25 The League Cup Show.

12.05 The Apprentice USA. 1.30 Weatherview. 1.35 BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Close. 6.20 Film: Once Upon a Honeymoon. (1942) 8.15 Life in a Cottage Garden with Carol Klein. 8.45 A to Z of TV Gardening. 9.30 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. 11.00 Live Cycling. World Cup Track Championships. 2.00 EastEnders. The Limehouse Golem. 4.30 Flug! It! (R) 5.15 Restoration Home. (R)

6.15 Food & Drink. Jun Tanaka helps create the perfect burger. (R)

6.45 Ski Sunday. Graham Bell presents highlights of the women's downhill at the World Cup event in Meribel, France, while Ed Leigh reports from Bormio. Bell also looks at hopefulness from Switzerland.

7.30 Open All Hours. Granville is left in charge of the shop. (R)

8.00 Top Gear. Jeremy Clarkson and Richard Hammond design a vehicle for elderly people, James May gets acquainted with the latest Range Rover and James McAvoy drives the most unusable used car.

9.00 Wonder of Life. Professor Brian Cox considers what makes Earth a home for life and asks what ingredients were necessary to transform this once barren planet. Last in the series.

10.00 Dancing on the Edge. Stanley is made editor of Music Express. (R)

11.05 The Nations Rugby Union. Highlights of the third weekend of this year's competition.

11.50 Film: 10 Rillington Place. (1971) Fact-based thriller, starring Richard Attenborough.

1.40 Sign Zone: Holby City. (R)

2.40 Being Eileen. (R) 3.05 Close.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Handy Manny. 6.10 Handy Manny. 6.25 The Hive. (R) 6.35 The Hoobs. (R) 6.45 Dino Dan. (R) 7.00 Dino Dan. (R) 7.10 Camimals. (R) 7.20 Camimals. (R) 7.25 Bookaboo. 7.45 Matt Hatter. 8.00 The Big Picture A for Awesomeness. 8.15 Rated A for Awesomeness. 8.30 Almost Naked Animals. (R) 8.45 Almost Naked Animals. (R) 9.00 The Aquabats Super Show. 9.25 ITV News. 9.30 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. 10.25 Murder, She Wrote. (R) 11.25 Dickensian Real Deal. (R) 12.25 TV News. Weather. 12.30 Carry On Henry. (1971) 1.15 Doc Martin. (R) 3.15 Agatha Christie's Marple. (R) 5.15 You've Been Framed! (R) 5.45 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.00 ITV News; Weather.

6.10 Dancing on Ice. The five remaining skaters get to grips with props in their routines in their battle to win places in next week's semi-final. Phillip Schofield and Christine Bleakley present. The results are at 8.30pm.

7.45 All Star Family Fortunes. With Nicola Adams and Michael Vaughan.

8.30 Dancing on Ice: The Skate Off. The two lowest-scoring couples battle it out.

9.00 Mr Selfridge. The Woolworths present Harry with some tough competition.

10.00 ITV News at Ten; Weather.

10.15 Her Majesty's Prison – Aylesbury. Two-part documentary about life at the young offenders' institution. (R)

11.50 Premiership Rugby Union. 12.00 The Store. 2.15 Monk. (R) 3.00 ITV Nightscreen. 5.05 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

11.55 Wimborne Runaway Jury. (2003) Courtroom thriller, starring John Cusack and Gene Hackman.

1.10 Chris Addison: My Funniest Year. (R) 3.00 4funies: Brian Gittins. (R) 3.30 Eating for Two. (R) 3.35 St Elsewhere. (R) 4.20 Deal or No Deal. (R) 5.15 Countdown. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.20 The Hoobs. (R) 6.45 The Hoobs. (R) 7.10 Will & Grace. (R) 7.35 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.00 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.30 Frasier. (R) 9.30 Sunday Brunch. 12.15 The Big Bang Theory. 1.10 The Simpsons. (R) 1.40 The Wedding Planner. (2001) 4.20 Time Team. 5.20 Deal or No Deal.

6.20 Channel 4 News.

6.50 The Political Slot. The Green Party's Natalie Bennett and Will Duckworth discuss immigration.

6.55 4rought. (R) A rabbi who helps Jewish Jews should learn from immigrants of other faiths.

7.00 Ottolenghi's Mediterranean Feast. New series. Chef Yotam Ottolenghi travels the southern and eastern Mediterranean to explore its cuisine. He begins his journey in Marrakech, tasting the Moroccan city's street food.

8.00 A Great British Air Disaster. The rise and fall of the De Havilland Comet.

9.00 Film: Unstoppable. (2010) Premiere. Two train operators must stop a runaway locomotive carrying toxic chemicals before it crashes. Thriller, starring Denzel Washington.

10.00 Film: Runaway Jury. (2003) Courtroom thriller, starring John Cusack and Gene Hackman.

11.50 The Exorcist: The True Story. (R)

12.50 SuperCams. (R) 4.00 HouseBusters. (R) 4.25 Divine Design. (R) 4.50 Rough Guide To. (R) 5.05 Hana's Hiptime. (R) 5.15 The Milkshake! Show. (R) 5.40 Thomas & Friends. (R) 5.50 Roary the Racing Car. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! Peppa Pig. 6.05 Roary the Racing Car. (R) 6.15 Fifi and the Flowertots. (R) 6.25 Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) 6.30 The Mr Men Show. (R) 6.45 Olive the Ostrich. (R) 6.50 Abby's Circus Show. (R) 7.00 Roobarb and Custard. (R) 7.10 Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) 7.20 Animal Antics. (R) 7.30 Make Way for Noddy. (R) 7.40 City of Friends. (R) 7.50 Little Princess. (R) 8.05 The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and Bert. (R) 8.15 Mr Tumble. (R) 8.20 Mio Mouse. (R) 8.25 Angelina Ballerina. (R) 8.45 Rupert Bear. (R) 9.00 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) 9.15 Toby Travelling Circus. 9.30 Roary the Racing Car. (R) 9.45 Jelly Roamy. (R) 10.00 Power Rangers Samurai. (R) 10.15 The Smurfs. (R) 10.30 and the Poirot. 11.10 Disney Shorts: Bone Bandit. (R) 11.15 Looney Tunes. (R) 11.20 Once Upon a Time. (R) 12.15 Cowboy Builders. (R) 1.20 Film: Winnie the Pooh: Springtime with Roo. (2004) 2.35 Film: Stuart Little 2. (2002) 4.05 To Hell and Back. (1955)

6.10 Back to the Ancestors.

7.05 Film: The White Squadron. (1968) Second World War drama, starring David McCallum.

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DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 Let's Dance for Comic Relief. 8.10 Film: Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time (2010) 10.00 Being Human 11.00 People Like Us. **BBC Four**

7.00 The Story of British Pathé 8.00 WHAM! Roy Lichtenstein at the Tate Modern. 9.00 Madness in the Desert: Paris to Dakar Rally. 10.00 Timeshift: Evernote. 11.00 Kung Fu Fighting – A Return of Martial Arts in Britain. 11.00 The Swing Thing

ITV

3.45 Take Me Out 4.55 Make Way for the Gossips. 5.55 Film: Babe (1995) 7.45 Film: Ocean's Eleven (2001) 10.00 The Only Way Is Essex 10.50 Film: The Grudge (2004)

ITV2

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ITV5

5.00 Revenge 6.00 The Big Bang Theory 7.00 New Girl 8.00 Film: Edward Scissorhands (1990) 10.00 Rude Tube 11.05 My Big Fat Diary

ITV4

2.55 Explorers (1985) 5.05 Inkhart (2008) 7.10 My Super Ex-Girlfriend (2009) 8.00 Nightights (2009) 10.00 A litigating attorney fights to prove her husband's innocence after the military accuse him of killing villagers in El Salvador. Thriller, starring Ashley Judd. 11.15 Blood and Chocolate (2007)

SUNDAY'S TV 24.02.13

CHOICE



Yotam Ottolenghi

Ottolenghi's Mediterranean Feast

Channel 4, 7pm

Okay so we don't really need any more culinary programmes hogging the schedules - it's a big enough head-scratcher trying to choose between the crop of TV chefs already on offer. However, you'll probably join us in making an exception for this particular one - even if it is only because he's getting us out and about to various idyllic destinations. First up in his exploration of the Mediterranean's cuisine, Yotam heads to Marrakech, Morocco, where he learns about the city's street food and dines at Jemaa El Fna square.

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ITV

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ITV2

3.45 Take Me Out 4.55 Make

What's On!

Film Choices

Monday

Striking Distance, Channel 5, 11pm
Cop Tom Hardy refuses to accept the suspect convicted for murdering his father is the real perpetrator of the crime. Meanwhile, his career derails and he is demoted to river patrol. However, his instincts prove accurate as the real criminal resurfaces. Thriller, starring Bruce Willis, Sarah Jessica Parker and Tom Sizemore. (1993)

Tuesday

Then She Found Me, BBC1, 12.15am

A New York teacher faces a mid-life crisis after her husband leaves her and her adoptive mother dies. To confuse matters further, she embarks on a relationship with the father of one of her students at the same time as her birth mother, an eccentric talk-show host, appears seeking reconciliation. Comedy drama, starring Helen Hunt, Bette Midler and Colin Firth. (2007)

Wednesday

The Mothman Prophecies, BBC1, 11.40pm

A bereaved journalist gets inexplicably lost on his way to Virginia, and ends up in a rural backwater where the residents are reporting paranormal encounters and sightings of strange lights. He investigates further and is startled to uncover sightings of a huge moth-like creature. Supernatural thriller, with Richard Gere, Laura Linney, Will Patton and Debra Messing. (2002)



Gladiator, Friday, ITV, 10.35pm

Thursday

Abducted, Channel 5, 3.20pm

A man wrongly imprisoned for murder is placed under the authority of a ruthless warden with political aspirations. Desperate to prove his innocence, the inmate escapes and abducts the official's wife. However, the situation takes an unexpected turn. Thriller, starring Sarah Wynter and Andrew W. Walker. (2007)

Friday

Gladiator, ITV, 10.35pm

Roman general Maximus Decimus Meridius is a casualty of a power struggle between the corrupt Emperor Commodus and the senate. Ordered to be put to death along with his family, he escapes his would-be killers and is sold into slavery, only to become a gladiator and seek revenge for the murder of his wife and child. Oscar-winning period epic, with Russell Crowe, Joaquin Phoenix and Derek Jacobi. (2000)

Armageddon, BBC1, 11.20pm

Nasa discovers an asteroid the size of Texas is on a collision course with Earth, so a drilling expert is recruited to train a team of misfits to transport a nuclear device into outer space to destroy it. Sci-fi thriller, with Bruce Willis, Ben Affleck, Liv Tyler, Michael Clarke Duncan, Billy Bob Thornton and Steve Buscemi. (1998)

Pick of the Week

The boys are back with their winning formula

Bruce Forsyth has earned the title 'King of Saturday Night Telly' after all, he's been hosting top-rated programmes at that time of the week for more than 50 years.

He's been an entertainer guaranteed to raise a smile since before many of us, and even our parents, were born thanks to hits such as *The Generation Game*, *Big Night* and, of course, his current smash *Strictly Come Dancing*.

A few presenters have attempted to steal his crown, including Noel Edmonds, but they've fallen by the wayside.

However, there is one duo out there that you suspect will take it one day – Ant and Dec.

Not only are they extremely good at presenting the same kind of shows as Bruce, they're excellent hosts in their own right with the kind of chemistry and charm money can't buy.

Those are facts ITV's schedules have clearly realised because they've made Ant and Dec absolute omnipresent – it sometimes feels as if barely five minutes goes by before they're back on the box.

And yes, we like them as much as the next TV expert, but we reckon we could live for at least a week without them popping up looking unnaturally chirpy.

However, we don't have to test that theory because, lo and behold, the Geordie duo are back on the box.

Those of us who grew up watching *Byker Grove* could never have imagined that one day these two, then better known as PJ and Duncan, would go on to become arguably the most popular double act on British TV.

Ant and Dec were always charismatic and, in their own way, quite cute, but it seems they have that extra-special, oh-so-difficult-to-define something that has allowed them to stand head and shoulders above the crowd – despite their diminutive height.

But not everything they've touched has turned to gold. The second series of *Red or Black* never broke four million viewers. So what should ultra-successful TV presenters do following a flop?

That's right, go back to an old favourite, a surefire hit. And that, it

seems, is what Ant and Dec have done by resurrecting their Saturday Night Takeaway.

The last series was broadcast in 2009, but we're pleased to note that nothing has really changed in the intervening years – after all, why change a winning formula?

So, expect to see members of the public trying to win the items featured in the ad break, as well as star performers in action.

Robbie Williams is the first A-lister to appear. He will be providing a musical interlude as well as a surprise for one lucky member of the viewing public. While, Hollywood star Danny DeVito steps into the voiceover booth in the first edition.

Although the star guests are a welcome sight, it's the competitions that make this show a watchable – and although they could be accused of suffering from over-exposure, we're looking forward to seeing them again.

And present again and again too because, let's face it, when you've got the chance to go to *Strictly*, there's going to be on our screens for some years to come.



Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway, Saturday, ITV, 7pm

Best of the Rest

Monday

Penguins – Spy in the Huddle, BBC1, 9pm

Thanks to this fascinating series, we now know our emperors from our Humboldts, but could you identify individual birds? It seems it's a big ask even for penguin parents as the last episode in the series looks at the challenges faced by the young of the species. The emperor chicks keep together in a huddle and it's up to the adults to check they are feeding the right child. Meanwhile, the Humboldts are left in burrows, which may sound cosy, but they are still at risk from vampire bats. Luckily for viewers, it's not all death and trauma – there's also footage of the emperors learning to skate, and the rockhoppers practising their jumping skills.

Black Mirror

Channel 4, 10pm

Waldo, a blue bear from a children's educational TV show, teaches youngsters about the world through interviews with politicians and establishment figures. However, the animated protagonist is actually an anarchic animated character on a satirical late-night topical comedy show, voiced and controlled by failed comedian Jamie Salter (Daniel Rigby). He unleashes a mix of humorous innuendo, sarcasm and childish vitriol once he has lured someone into the studio. With a Waldo pilot in the offing, the animated character is soon standing against one of his victims, Conservative Liam Monroe (Tobias Menzies). Romance and a viral internet clip are thrown into the mix for Charlie Brooker's cross between 2012 smash *Ted*, and Robert Redford's 1972 drama *The Candidate*.

Tuesday

Shameless, Channel 4, 10pm

All good things must come to an end, and this week sees the arrival of the final series of Channel 4's hit comedy drama. The Maguires' empire seems to be doing well. While Mimi (Tina Malone) hijacks the local school via the PTA, Shane (Nicky Evans) is busy getting a new business venture off the ground. However, just as the rogue clan think things are going well, Jamie's (Aaron McCusker) shock discovery leads to him withdrawing from the family firm. Meanwhile, Frank's latest job as a caretaker helps fund his latest leisure activity involving Sherrilee (Sarah Totty) and Derrilee (Sue Vincent), a prostitute double act dubbed the Gastric Bandits.

My New Hand

BBC1, 10.35pm

Thanks to research and human ingenuity, medical science never ceases to amaze. Recently there has been the first bionic eye and face transplants – a case of science fiction becoming science fact. But the latest headline-making procedure is a hand transplant, which happened in Leeds in December. This documentary follows Professor Simon Kay and his team from making the initial decision to carry it out, through to the first time that 51-year-old Mark Cahill sees his new hand.

Wednesday

Child of Our Time, BBC1, 9pm

There were rumours that this fascinating insight into child development might not be returning to our screens – thankfully, they have proved unfounded. So Dr Robert Winston is back for a two-part run. This time the youngsters are 12, so since we last saw them they have started at secondary school and have begun to suffer some of the trials and tribulations involved in teenage life. The concluding part will be broadcast tomorrow, and features an insight into the children's family changes, parental expectations and what perils they may face before we meet them again in a few years' time.

Thursday

The Schoolboy Assassin: Murder Files, Channel 5, 8pm

For over a decade, Michael Ross was regarded as a hero thanks to his Iraq war service. But, in 2008, he was convicted of murdering Orkney-based waiter Shamsuddin Mahmood during an unprovoked attack in June 1994. Although a suspect almost from the start of the investigation, the only evidence at the police's

disposal was circumstantial, and it wasn't until 2006 when a witness finally came forward that Ross was eventually convicted of the crime. This fascinating documentary charts events from the murder to his attempts to appeal in 2012.

Friday

Mary and Martha, BBC1, 8.30pm

Not content with being the man who gave us *Blackadder*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, and *Love Actually*, writer and director Richard Curtis also co-founded Comic Relief, and this year he's making a very special contribution in the form of this one-off drama. Granted, on paper *Mary and Martha* doesn't sound particularly funny, but it is a reminder of why Comic Relief exists and the causes it raises money for. Double-Oscar winner Hilary Swank stars as Mary, an American woman who meets the English Martha (Brenda Blethyn) in a remote corner of Mozambique. Despite their very different backgrounds, the women discover they are bonded by a common tragedy.

Piers Morgan's Life Stories: Lorraine Kelly, ITV, 9pm

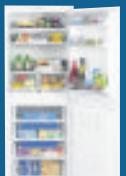
Lorraine Kelly has been grilling celebrities and politicians for almost three decades, and has attracted no end of red-blooded admirers in the process, including *JLS* star Marvin Humes, who labelled her a cougar. In this show, she's responding to assorted personal questions, such as how she feels about being seen as a sex symbol. She also talks about how she was sacked from *GMTV*, weeks after giving birth to her daughter.



Shameless, Tuesday, Channel 4, 10pm

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9th-16th March 2013

Breath Of Spring by Peter Coke

Dame Beatrice houses a collection of middle-aged guests and her maid Lily. To repay Dame Beatrice for giving her a job despite her criminal past, Lily presents her with a mink stole filched from the flat next door. The Brigadier deploys his troops to return the fur, the whole campaign is so invigorating that they decide to relive the excitement by pinching furs and giving the proceeds to charity.

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Films at Oldbury Rep

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SKYFALL

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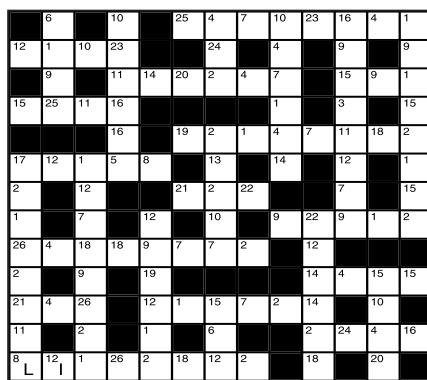
What's On!

Brain Gym

No.209

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



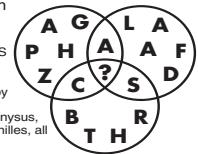
SEVEN GREAT GAMES IN ONE!

SEARCH: DAILY EXPRESS PUZZLES

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IN ONE HANDY APP!

Ciriclegram

Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters within each circle can be arranged to form words on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:
The letter represented by the question mark is I. Dionysus, Poseidon, Achilles, all Greek gods.

ALL YOUR PUZZLE
NEEDS IN ONE
HANDY APP!

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

- Not so many in the cafe we run (5)
- Fine forced to come to land (7)
- Doesn't move the corpse (7)
- Make an admission (3,2)
- Philosopher reveals hypocrisy, we hear (4)
- What to do to get the most satisfactory trip on horseback (8)
- 13 and 19 Down.
- Screen section put back as a hatch (4-4)
- 14 and 17 Across.
- Besides a greater amount in surplus (8)
- The end of the trip - touch down before autumn (8)
- See 14 Across.
- Native of Australia to leave after a row (5)
- An appointment associated with the French evangelist (7)
- The distinctive nature of eastern scenes, maybe (7)
- They are characterised in an adaptation of "The Loser" (5)

Quick Clues:

Across

- Happen (5)
- In addition (7)
- Betrayer (7)
- Zest (5)
- Rid (4)
- Trader (8)
- Munch (4)
- Let it stand (4)
- Maintain (8)
- Support (4)
- Sluggish (5)
- Disclose (7)
- Beg (7)
- Finished (5)

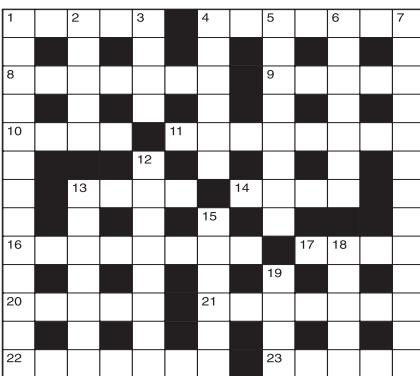
Down

- Sounding to be in favour of information the prophet should have (13)
- Who brings endless sorrow to a husband? (5)
- Fence the track (4)
- A crowd by the Spanish accommodation building (6)
- Load it in - it's needed for expansion (8)
- External telephone connection for broad statement (7)
- Schools that have small charges (13)
- The result of incomplete waxing! (4-4)
- Could they be an inclusion in temporary accommodation? (7)
- Stick to use as an axe (6)
- Six talk endlessly, being full of life (5)
- See 13 Across.

Quick Clues:

Down

- Rusty (3-2-8)
- Pursue (5)
- Scold (4)
- Trade by exchange (6)
- Wisdom (8)
- Far (7)
- Lacking self-control (5-8)
- Disparage (8)
- Vanity (7)
- Majestic (6)
- Wandered (5)
- Pain (4)



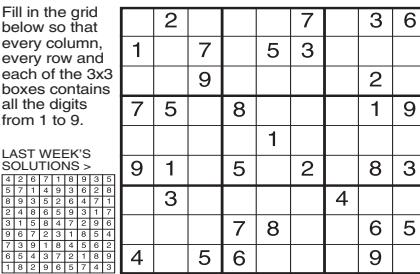
LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 3 Ship-shape; 8 Upon; 9 Rehearsal; 10 Cereal; 11 Atoll; 14 Unite; 15 Dice; 16 Drill; 18 Ears; 20 Inepit; 21 Serve; 24 Settle; 25 Magnolias; 26 Once; 27 Essential. Down: 1 Punctures; 2 Couriers; 4 Heel; 5 Pleat; 6 Herald; 7 Plan; 9 Rated; 11 A time; 12 Limestone; 13 Feathered; 17 Lives; 19 Seance; 22 Valet; 23 Dais; 24 Saga. QUICK - Across: 3 Transport; 8 Espy; 9 Stretched; 10 Fleece; 11 Cycle; 14 Radio; 15 Edge; 16 Plays; 18 Thud; 20 Tacit; 21 Roost; 24 Fasten; 25 Frightful; 26 Soon; 27 Stemness. Down: 1 Perforate; 2 Splendour; 4 Rite; 5 Needy; 6 Pickle; 7 Reel; 9 Scoop; 11 Chart; 12 Education; 13 Pertinent; 17 Steal; 19 Dodger; 22 Satin; 23 Fret; 24 Fuss.

Sudoku

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

4	2	6	7	1	8	9	3	5
5	7	1	4	9	3	6	2	8
8	9	3	5	2	6	4	7	1
2	4	1	7	8	5	9	6	3
3	1	5	8	4	7	2	9	6
9	6	7	2	3	1	8	5	4
7	3	9	1	6	4	5	6	2
6	5	4	3	7	2	1	8	9
1	8	2	9	5	3	7	4	6



Seven great games in one!

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD
QUICK CROSSWORD
CODEWORD SUDOKU
WORD PUZZLER
WORD SEARCH
NUMBER CRUNCH

SEARCH: DAILY EXPRESS PUZZLES
On the iPhone, iPod Touch & iPad



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costing you £££'s



Don't let your empty home
cost you money, help is available
to get it back into use.

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Dudley
Metropolitan Borough Council

Home of Property

Top guide for Dudley, Halesowen, Sedgley, Kidderminster and Stourbridge



Cherry Cottage has had substantial work carried out



The property has a large, light and airy conservatory

Superb family home on sale



The spacious living room has a wood burning stove

A SIX-bedroom property in around an acre of gardens on the fringe of the South Staffordshire greenbelt is on the market with a price guide £575,000.

Cherry Cottage at Stourton has undergone a comprehensive schedule of works to transform it into a superb family home, according to the agents, with meticulous attention to detail with quality fittings and craftsmanship.

Standing behind a walled frontage and gated entrance, a driveway sweeps around the front garden with a wildlife pond and continues to the garages at

the rear of the property. On the ground floor is an impressive hall/study area with recessed fireplace and log burner, a utility, useful store and dining room with feature fire surround and double doors to the breakfast kitchen which has recently been refitted with cream units and granite tops, plus an Aga and Belfast sink with many integrated appliances. The lounge has a full height brick fireplace with raised hearth and log burner and French doors to the side, and also on the ground floor is a double bedroom with French doors and view of the garden and a shower room with WC and vanity unit with granite top and feature wash basin.

Bedroom two also has an en-suite with a P-shaped bath with shower over, and there is also a house bathroom. Outside are landscaped lawns with mature trees and ornamental pond, an orchard, duck pond, further grassland and log store plus substantial parking area, workshop and double width garage providing access to two further garages.

Call Lee, Shaw on 01384 396066 for further details or to view.

There is also a huge conservatory

which adds to the living and entertaining space on offer.

On the first floor are five bedrooms, the master with high gloss fronted furniture, Juliet balcony and en-suite with large corner shower, vanity unit with granite top and wash basin.

Bedroom two also has an en-suite with a P-shaped bath with shower over, and there is also a house bathroom. Outside are landscaped lawns with mature trees and ornamental pond, an orchard, duck pond, further grassland and log store plus substantial parking area, workshop and double width garage providing access to two further garages.

Call Lee, Shaw on 01384 396066 for further details or to view.

Lettings hickshadley.com 0121 585 6688

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HALESOWEN, NEWTON COURT

A recently converted three bedroom penthouse apartment finished to an extremely high standard centrally located with commuter links to Halesowen and Birmingham. Featuring 2 double bedrooms, both with fitted wardrobes, 2 bathrooms, one single bedroom, secondary glazing throughout. Allocated parking. Viewings recommended. EPC = C £750 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, NEWLAND GARDENS

Spacious well situated link-detached bungalow in cul-de-sac position. Large lounge, fitted kitchen opening into superb proportioned full width conservatory overlooking private rear garden. 2 double bedrooms, bathroom garage & driveway, gas central heating/double glazed. Available immediately. EPC = D £675 PCM



HALESOWEN, SANDERSON PLACE

Luxury living in Hayley Green is this superb luxury first floor apartment offering spacious accommodation including open plan lounge/kitchen, two double bedrooms, master with en-suite, a further well appointed bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing and allocated parking. Available Mid April 2013. EPC = B £650 PCM



QUINTON, GRAYSWOOD PARK ROAD

Characterful home with good sized reception rooms. An unfurnished semi detached house in this very popular residential area. Comprising 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, 2 bedrooms and a study room, bathroom with shower, separate w.c., gas central heating, front & rear gardens, garage & driveway parking. Available mid February. EPC = D £650 PCM



MERRY HILL, MADISON AVENUE

Flexible accommodation, a spacious unfurnished modern townhouse, within walking distance of Merry Hill shopping centre, family kitchen, en-suite WC, dining room/study, lounge, bathroom, 3 bedrooms, master en-suite shower room, allocated parking space. EPC = C £595 PCM



TIPTON, PEARTREE AVENUE

Cul-de-sac location. This deceptively large 3 bedroom terraced house is undergoing a re-decoration and re-carpeting. It features a spacious lounge, large modern fitted kitchen, house bathroom with shower, nice sized garden, driveway parking and in a quiet cul-de-sac location. EPC = C £550 PCM



HALESOWEN, THE INFIELDS

Stunning and modern on a well sought after new estate. This top floor apartment features 2 bedrooms, master with fitted wardrobes, large lounge with real dark wood flooring, super high spec kitchen with built in fridge/freezer & washer/dryer, bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, allocated parking. Available immediately. Not to be missed! EPC = C £550 PCM



HALESOWEN, HAGLEY STREET

Fantastic refurbished apartment above a electrical shop in the very centre of Halesowen, featuring a large open plan living area with modern fitted kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom with shower. By agreement £40 fixed electric charge. EPC = C £550 PCM



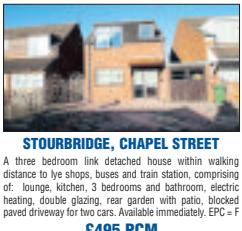
HALESOWEN, TENTERFIELDS

An exceptional opportunity to rent this room in a shared house, with no bills to pay at all, cleaning done for you, towels and tea and coffee supplied for each room. Also the use of free WiFi, use of the lounge, kitchen, office room. All rooms have their own ensuite facilities. Well worth a viewing, and ideal for a single person. EPC = C £500 PCM



STOURBRIDGE, PROSPECT GARDENS

Desirable Oldswinford location. Close to Stourbridge Town Centre this newly refurbished, unfurnished mid terraced house comprises 2 bedrooms, fitted dining kitchen, pleasant lounge, gas central heating, double glazing, bathroom with shower, small rear garden, parking space to front. EPC = D £495 PCM



STOURBRIDGE, CHAPEL STREET

A three bedroom link detached house within walking distance to Iye shops, buses and train station, comprising of: lounge, kitchen, 3 bedrooms and bathroom, electric heating, double glazing, rear garden with patio, blocked paved driveway for two cars. Available immediately. EPC = F £495 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, DELINGPOLE WALK

Located on a popular development, close to Old Hill train station and local shops, featuring 2 bedrooms, gas central heating, living room, fitted kitchen, downstairs wc, bathroom with shower, rear garden. EPC = B £475 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, UNITT DRIVE

Quiet and peaceful location. Located in a quiet and popular residential area, ideal for walking into Cradley Heath and local train station. This apartment on the top floor has a double bedroom and a single bedroom, large lounge and feature fireplace, house bathroom with shower, modern kitchen with washer/dryer. Available 26/03/13. EPC = C £475 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, POWKE LANE

An unfurnished first flat, close to shops and local train station featuring electric storage heating, fitted kitchen, living room, 1 double bedroom, bathroom with shower, parking. EPC = E £475 PCM



BRIERLEY HILL, FOXDALE DRIVE

Freshly redecorated and within 3 minutes drive of Brierley Hill town centre and a few minutes more from Merry Hill shopping centre. This unfurnished end terraced house comprises 1 double bedroom and 1 single bedroom, 1 with fitted wardrobes, house bathroom with shower, nice sized room, fitted kitchen, allocated parking, small front garden. EPC = C £450 PCM



DUDLEY, SOUTHGATE WAY

A stunning and spacious well presented unfurnished third floor apartment. featuring 2 double bedrooms, electric storage heating, double glazing, open plan living room with fitted kitchen, house bathroom with shower, allocated parking space. Viewing highly recommended. Available immediately. EPC = B £450 PCM



HALESOWEN, MANOR LANE

A spacious furnished first floor flat featuring gas central heating, living room with sofas, large double bedroom with bed and wardrobes, large shower room, secure parking at rear. Available immediately. EPC = C £420 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, WINCHESTER CLOSE

A very well presented, unfurnished first floor apartment, close to the M5 J2, comprises 2 bedrooms, fitted kitchen, double glazing, bathroom with shower, parking space and parking area for visitors, communal gardens. EPC rating = D £395 PCM



DUDLEY, BLACKACRE ROAD

A luxury contemporary living, service studios 1, 4 and 5 all with shared bathroom facilities. Will include council tax, broadband, servicing, heating and hot water, sky tv. £950 PCM



HALESOWEN, APPERLEY WAY

Quiet location. An opportunity to acquire a spacious first floor apartment. Part furnished to suit tenant, on the ever popular Homer Hill estate, comprises: 1 double bedroom with fitted wardrobes, lounge with dining table and chairs, table/office, fitted kitchen with white goods, modern house bathroom with shower, driveway parking available immediately, ideal for first time renters. EPC = F £375 PCM



NETHERTON, ST GEORGES ROAD

Spacious and quiet. This lovely unfurnished first floor apartment features electric storage heating, living room, fitted kitchen with a fridge freezer, 1 double bedroom with fitted wardrobes, house bathroom with shower, rear garden, parking space. EPC = D £375 PCM



WEBSITE:
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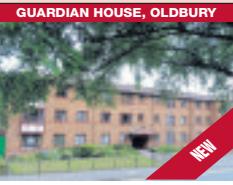
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Woodhouse Road, Quinton
NEW

Spacious home with 2 double bedrooms
17ft (max) lounge & 15ft dining kitchen
Large bathroom with white suite
Benefiting UPVC DB6, GCH & alarm
Front & enclosed rear gardens.
EPC Rating D
£99,950 Ref: D1272



Guardian House, Oldbury
NEW

2 bed ground flr retirement flat with parking
15ft 5 lounge diner & kitchen
2 bedrooms & shower room
Secondary glazing & electric heating
Communal gardens & gated parking
Vacant possession, EPC rating D
£65,000 Ref: D1275



Grayswood Park Road, Quinton
NEW

Much improved 3 bed semi
27ft lounge/dining room, Refitted kitchen
2 double beds, single bed, Family bathroom
Driveway to front & rear Garden with patio
UPVC double glazing, GCH & alarm
Internal inspection recommended. EPC D
£186,950 Ref: D1274



Grafton Road, Oldbury
NEW

Detached home with no upward chain
18ft8 lounge with separate dining room
Refitted kitchen with built in appliances
Refitted bathroom & 3 good size bedrooms
Blockpaved & driveway for several cars
UPVC DG & GCH. EPC rating D
£179,950 Ref: D1273



Chelsea Close, Harborne
NEW

3 double bedroom home in cul-de-sac
15ft5 lounge, dining room & kitchen
Downstairs wc & large family bathroom
Garage & driveway giving plenty of parking
UPVC double glazing & gas central heating
Lawned rear garden. EPC rating: C
£147,500 Ref: D1277



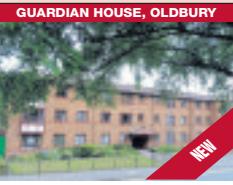
Barn Croft, Bartley Green
NEW

Large 2 double bedroom home
Driveway for 2 cars & garden
Located in cul-de-sac position
21ft6 lounge diner, 13ft9 kitchen & utility
Refitted bathroom with white suite
Majority UPVC DG & GCH. EPC rating D
£109,950 Ref: D1271



Frankley Avenue, Halesowen
NEW

Four bed extended home with garage
Extended kitchen & UPVC conservatory
20ft max lounge & separate dining room
Master fitted bedroom with ensuite shower
Three further bedrooms & family bathroom
Block paved driveway & garage. EPC rating E
£209,950 Ref: D1182



Perry Hill Road, Oldbury
NEW

Extended & immaculate 3 bed home
2 receptions, breakfast kitchen & utility
Conservatory & refitted d/s shower room
Refitted w/s bathroom with roll top bath
Private garden with westerly aspect
Driveway & garage. EPC rating:
£195,000 Ref: D1243



Apesley Road, Oldbury
NEW

Extended 4 bed semi
Large Kitchen with dining room off
Lounge & separate sitting room
4 beds, shower room & 2nd WC
Parking to front & enclosed rear garden
UPVC DB6, GCH & alarm. EPC rating: D
£179,950 Ref: D1230



Marshwood Croft, Halesowen
NEW

3 bedroom home with conservatory
Lounge, dining room & kitchen
Garage & blockpaved driveway
Rear garden with private aspect
Cul-de-sac location
UPVC DG & GCH. EPC rating D
£164,995 Ref: D1235



Romsley Road, Oldbury
NEW PRICE

Superb 3 bedroom semi-detached home
Refitted 16ft dining kitchen & 13ft lounge
Refitted bathroom with white suite
Driveway to front & workshop to rear
UPVC DG & gas central heating
EPC rating: D
Offers in excess of £100,000 Ref: D1225



Landswood Road, Oldbury
NEW PRICE

Modernised 3 bedroom home
Refitted dining kitchen & conservatory
14ft lounge & d/s wc
Refitted shower room
Driveway & carport
UPVC DG & GCH. EPC rating C
£124,950 Ref: D1240



Abberley Road, Oldbury
NEW PRICE

Well presented mid terraced 3 bed home
Driveway to front giving off road parking
16ft dining kitchen, utility room & lounge
Family bathroom with white suite
2 decked areas in the garden & lawn
UPVC double glazing & GCH. EPC rating D
£118,950 Ref: D1250



Seedhouse Court, Cradley Heath
SOLD STC

Spacious first floor flat with 2 double beds
Secluded position over looking woodland
Lounge & kitchen - with woodland views
Communal rear gardens - allocated parking
Fitted with gas central heating & combi boiler
Vacant possession - EPC rating C
£79,950 Ref: D1046

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MUSHROOM GREEN, DUDLEY WOOD



Offers in the region of £270,000

A Rare Opportunity To Acquire A Residence Dating Back To 1857 Situated In This Conservation Area.

EPC = D. Reception Hall, Sitting Room, Kitchen, Orangery, Two Bedrooms, Two Bathrooms, Garage, Rear Garden. Perfect For Elderly or Downsizers Looking for Tranquil Bungalow Near Amenities with Potential to Convert Loft to Bedroom (Currently Already with Radiator and Bed!).

Contact: Edward Mitchell on 01384 370232



WYCHERLEY WAY, CRADLEY HEATH

Guide Price £149,950

Modern Well Presented Link Detached House Ideal for First Time Buyers.
EPC = C. The Accommodation Comprises; Hallway, Sitting Room, Large Kitchen/Diner, Downstairs WC, Three Bedrooms, En-Suite to Master, Family Bathroom, Externally there is a Garage, Parking and Rear Garden.

Contact: Edward Mitchell on 01384 370232



TANHOUSE LANE, HALESOWEN

Guide Price £148,000

An Immaculate Traditional Three Bedroom Semi Detached Home On This Sought After Road.

EPC = D. Porch, Reception Hall, Sitting Room, Separate Dining Room, Extended Kitchen, WC, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Excellent Garden with Workshop, Garage with Access Via Up & Over Door to Garden, Driveway Parking.

Contact: Edward Mitchell 01384 370232



OAKHAM ROAD, DUDLEY
Guide Price £119,950

A Well Maintained Semi Detached Property In Need of Some Cosmetic Updating
EPC = C. The Accommodation Comprises: Sitting Room, Kitchen/Diner, Three Bedrooms & Bathroom, Externally There Is A Garage, Driveway & Rear Garden.

Contact: Edward Mitchell 01384 370232



CEDAR GRANGE, ENVILE ROAD, KINVER

Guide Price £142,950

A Luxury Development of Six Stylish Apartments Located in the Much Sought after Village of Kinver.
EPC = B. The Accommodation Comprises; Large Open Plan Lounge Kitchen Diner, One Large Double Bedroom, First Floor Apartments with a Second Bedroom. Contemporary Bathroom Suites in All Apartments, The Kitchens have Fully Integrated Appliances and the Fixtures and Fittings are to the Highest Standard, Externally there is Allocated and Visitors Parking.

Contact: Edward Mitchell on 01384 370232



SHOW HOME PHOTOGRAPH



MADISON AVENUE, BRIERLEY HILL

Guide Price £149,950

An Excellent Three Bedroom Town house Situated In This Popular Development.
EPC = C Hall, Cloakroom, Study, Dining Kitchen, Sitting Room, Three Bedrooms, En-Suite, House Bathroom, Allocated Parking Space, No Upward Chain.

Contact: Edward Mitchell 01384 370232



Dudley Office
01384 237313
Halesowen Office
0121 550 7474

DIXONS

Estate Agents

Doing More...

Scotts Green Close, Dudley



£200,000

A well presented three bedroom detached bungalow briefly comprising lounge, dining room, kitchen and bathroom. Also benefitting from garage.

EPC Awaited

The Broadway, Dudley



Offers Over £190,000

Detached three bedroom property briefly comprising lounge, modern kitchen, downstairs shower room, family bathroom and rear garden.

EPC E

William Barrows Way, Tipton



£130,000

End terrace four bedroom property briefly comprising lounge, kitchen/diner, bathroom, master bedroom with en-suite and rear garden.

EPC C

Penrice Drive, Tividale



Offers Over £110,000

Semi detached three bedroom property briefly comprising lounge, kitchen/diner, bathroom, front and rear gardens, driveway and garage.

EPC D

Deepdale Lane, Dudley



NEW

Offers Over £90,000

Semi detached two bedroom property comprising lounge, kitchen, WC, bathroom, front and rear gardens. Must be viewed to fully appreciate.

EPC D

Clifton Street, Bilston



£80,000

A two bedroom end terraced property briefly comprising two reception rooms, kitchen, downstairs WC, upstairs bathroom and rear garden.

EPC E

Highland Road, Dudley



£80,000

Terraced two bedroom property briefly comprising lounge, kitchen/diner, upstairs shower room, rear garden and parking.

EPC D

Cromwell Street, Dudley



£65,000

A three bedroom terraced property briefly comprising WC, dining room, lounge, kitchen and bathroom.

EPC D

Radbourne Drive, Halesowen



EPC D



Offers Over £240,000

A modern detached house situated at the head of a cul-de-sac. Halesowen

Milford Croft, Rowley Regis



EPC D



Offers Over £230,000

A modern detached house comprising four bedrooms, lounge, garage and rear garden. Halesowen

Ross, Rowley Regis



EPC D

Offers Over £160,000

A modern detached bungalow comprising lounge, kitchen, bathroom and two bedrooms. Front and rear gardens, drive and garage. Halesowen

Albert Road, Halesowen



£145,000

A three bedroom semi-detached house benefitting from a conservatory and off road parking. Halesowen

EPC D

Olive Hill Road, Halesowen



EPC Awaited

£140,000

Extended traditional semi detached house with accommodation comprising extended kitchen/diner, three bedrooms and rear garden. Halesowen



£90,000

Modern semi detached property with accommodation comprising lounge, two bedrooms, and a garage. Halesowen

EPC C

Motoring

Compiled by Motoring
Editor Sharon Walters

Two new super models from SEAT

TO prove that SEAT really is in touch with what its customers want, the company has introduced the Mii and Ibiza Toca editions. And for the new reg customers can get a great deal.

Toca is the Spanish word for 'touch', giving a fairly obvious clue as to the particular bonus that buyers get when choosing one of these new models.

Yes, it's a touch screen. Specifically, Toca models come with the very useful SEAT Portable System, first introduced to the SEAT range with the Mii city car.



The Mii Toca, like the Ibiza, comes loaded with equipment including air con

The Mii Toca is based on the 1.0 60 PS SE version, and adds the SEAT Portable System and rear parking sensors – both especially useful in the car's natural environment, the busy city streets.

At full retail price, the additional outlay for the Mii Toca edition over the SE is a modest £475 – great value when these options individually would require an £805 spend.

In the Ibiza Toca, buyers get a set of 16-inch 'Stratos' alloy wheels (up from 15 inches) along with the SEAT Portable System, for a £425 premium over the SE car on which it's based.

The Toca editions are available to order now, with first cars expected to hit the road during early February – and customers buying either the Mii or Ibiza Toca before April will enjoy huge discounts.

That's because until the end of March 2013 the Mii Toca is reduced by £850, putting the three-door model at an attractive £8,995, while the Ibiza Toca editions all receive a £2,705 cut, leaving the three-door (SC) model with an out-standing £9,995 price.

Air conditioning

Every Toca edition is loaded with equipment, including air conditioning, a leather steering wheel and gear knob, heated and electrically adjustable door mirrors, electric front windows, electronic stability control (ESC), central locking, and front fog lights with cornering function (Ibiza Toca only).

Navigation

The SEAT Portable System packs a deluge of digital driver aids into a light-weight package not much bigger than a cassette box. It includes satellite navigation, Bluetooth phone connectivity with audio streaming, a MicroSD card slot for music storage, and trip computer functions, all controlled via a foldable interface on a five-inch touchscreen.

"The Ibiza Toca is another example of SEAT giving great value to buyers by providing cutting-edge equipment at a very reasonable price," said Simon Bradley, product manager at SEAT UK.

"The SE specification is very popular among current Ibiza owners, which is no surprise given the amount of comfort, safety and convenience equipment it has as standard. But we really want as many as possible to have access to



The new three-door SEAT Ibiza Toca, complete with 16-inch 'Stratos' wheels

the remarkable SEAT Portable System. By bringing big car technology to the city car and supermini classes, the device really has moved the game forward," he added.

The SEAT Portable System is, from this month, available as an optional extra on all Ibiza models, superseding the TomTom unit previously available. The system is capable of having additional functionality added by way of software upgrades, and will shortly be updated to include internet search functionality. Existing SEAT Portable System owners will be able to access these additional features.

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Official Government Environment Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). Chevrolet Spark Range: Urban 42.8 (6.6), Extra Urban 67.3 (4.2), Combined 55.4 (5.1) CO₂ emissions 119/g/km. Chevrolet Aveo Range: Urban 34.0 (8.3) – 67.2 (4.2), Extra Urban 55.3 (5.1) – 85.6 (3.3), Combined 44.8 (6.3) – 78.4 (3.6), CO₂ emissions 147 – 95g/km.

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Swimmers take charge in opening winter gala

SWIMMING'S Worcester Winter League lived up to its name in 2013 with round one cancelled due to snow.

The second round date became the first round and saw Halesowen A travel to Bromsgrove and Halesowen B to Droitwich.

The A team got off to a fine start and led from the first event to win the gala by 19 points.

The B team were depleted with a number of swimmers unavailable, but some personal best times saw the team secure third place.

The A team won 24 out of 40 events. Double individual event winners were Chloe Finch and Lauren Hill in the butterfly and freestyle and India Hanke and Josh Bradley in the backstroke and breaststroke.

Other winners were Katy Morrice, Zach Collins and Mark Laing (freestyle), Ben Meakin (butterfly), Michael Edmonds and Euan Vaughan-Hawkins (backstroke) and Max Rollason (breaststroke). The relay teams pulled off a clean sweep and were unbeaten all night.

The 11 and under team included Kitty Luton and Daniel Hippiss, the 13 and unders Emma Bird, Talia Mitchell, Jakob Baker and James Cuthbert, the 15 and unders Natasha Bird, Emma Parsons and Joe Coxon and the open teams featured Hannah Cuthbert and Becky Spoor.

B team swimmers found wins harder to come by although Luke Morris took the butterfly, Sam Bradley-Wood the backstroke and Jack Simpson the freestyle.

The mixed open medley team including Eliza Bradley, Sam Carey, Imogen Davies, Jacob Darby and Jack Slattery also grabbed first spot.

Bromsgrove gala: Halesowen A 219, Worcester A 200, Worcester B 148, Bromsgrove Hill 188, Droitwich gala: Stourbridge B 188, Oldbury 182, Halesowen B 142, Perry Beeches & SSS 136, Fox Hollies 103

TCR are set to go the distance

WEDNESBURY team Total Control Racing are looking for a distance year.

TCR will make a major entry into endurance racing with a deal to run a SEAT Leon Cupra in the 2013 Britcar Production Cup.

TCR, better known for sprint events, will run drivers Mike Robinson and Graham Johnson in the Britcar event.

Jacob's fine work helps craft 5-2 win

Boys League

Halas Hawks U9 North 5 Penn U9 2
A FINE performance in midfield and up front by Jacob Phillips helped Halas to victory.

An even first half tipped in Halas' favour as Callum Deeming scored just before the break.

In the second half, Callum Redfern provided a through ball for Lewis McGing to make it 2-0.

Penn pulled a goal back before Phillips fired past the Penn keeper for 3-1. Deeming's long run and cross set up McGing to score before Penn broke away after a Halas corner to make it 4-2. Deeming

Oldswinford U9 2

Halas Hawks U9 West 2
The under-nines West's goals came from Jack Blakeway and a long-distance lob by Darryl Ledington.

Halas might have taken all three points, but couldn't find a winner.

Old Wulfrunians U9 7

Halas Hawks U9 East 0

Under-nines East lost heavily at table-topping Old Wulfrunians.

There was plenty of effort from the visitors, but Old Wulfs' quality shone through as Halas suffered their worst defeat of the season despite the efforts of their man of the match James Knight.

Halas Hawks

Halas Hawks U10 West 5

Sedgley Scorpions U10 East 2

Halas maintained their position at the top of Division Three against a much-improved Sedgley side.

They went in 4-0 up at half-time with a hat-trick from Harvey Brookes and a fourth from Brodie Crumpton. Keeper and man of the match James Exall kept Sedgley at bay with a string of fine saves.

The second half saw Sedgley come more into the game with two goals to make life uncomfortable for Halas but Jayke Adams settled

his side's nerves, rounding the keeper to slot the ball into an empty net.

Kewford Eagles U14 South 6

Halas Hawks U14 0

A poor first 20 minutes saw the under-14s concede four goals against the league leaders, Kewford South.

The rest of the game was much closer with Halas creating chances but not being able to convert them.

Kewford added two more before the end. Halas man of the match was awarded to Harry Clements.

Halas Hawks U15 3

Gornal Colts U15 South 3

A top of the table tie against

Gornal Colts South saw the U15s go 2-1 up before half time with goals from Josh Mason and Tom Bagley.

Josh Mason scored again to make it 3-1 but Gornal came back to make it even with the last corner of the game. Man of the match was Charlie Bagley for an outstanding performance and three assists.

Halas Hawks U16 7

Brierley & Hagley Celtic U16 0

The under-16s returned to league action with a big victory against Brierley and Hagley Celtic.

Goals arrived from Josh March (2), Dan Willetts (2), Mitchell Tomlinson, Jake Walley and Jon Rizzo.

On track for cycle speedway challenge

BIRMINGHAM'S speedway stars will turn to pedal power in a good cause.

They have challenged Midlands rivals Dudley Heathens to a match - at cycle speedway.

A team representing the former Cradley club, which is expected to include local lads Ashley Morris, Dan Greenwood and Paul Starke, will face up to the Brummies at Sandwell's track on Wednesday, March 13 at 7.30pm.

The event will help raise cash for Sandwell following a recent vandalism attack. The track is at Tividale Community Recreation Centre, Lower City Road, B69 2HA.

Surprise

Heathens boss Will Pottinger said: "Birmingham approached us and we thought it was a nice idea."

"I'm told Graham Drury (Birmingham boss) has already started telling his riders to get out on their push bikes, that's how much he wants to win. We will go there for a fun night and we might just surprise him."

Drury said: "I was very upset when I heard about the vandalism and Brian Buck, who is a remarkable individual who did so much to champion the return of speedway in Birmingham in 2007, has been involved there for years. I spoke to Brian and then I got in touch with Will Pottinger at Dudley. I'm hoping supporters of both clubs come along."

"There will be a nominal admission fee and all money will go towards the repairs needed by Sandwell Cycle Speedway Club."

Meanwhile, Dudley have confirmed their fixtures for the 2013 season.

	Match
22	Coventry (Challenge)A
	April
7	Mildenhall (NL Shield)A
9	Coventry (Challenge)H
23	British Under-21 FinalH
30	Mildenhall (NL Shield)H
	May
21	King's LynnH
28	Buxton (NL KO Cup)H
	June
11	CoventryH
23	Buxton (NL KO Cup)A
25	MildenhallH
	July
16	Golden HammerH
23	ReservedH
30	KentH
31	King's LynnH
	August
4	BuxtonA
6	Isle of WightA
13	StokeH
25	KentA
27	Isle of WightH
	September
3	BuxtonH
6	CoventryA
8	MildenhallA
10	ReservedH

* Stoke v Dudley to be confirmed. All matches National League unless stated otherwise.

Visitors overhauled in closely-fought derby

Handsworth 31 Wednesbury 21

WEDNESBURY led a keenly-contested derby match only to be overhauled in the second half by the home side.

The Midlands Three West (North) game was spoiled for both sides with numerous handling and kicking mistakes which put pressure on each team.

After a few skirmishes and keeping Handsworth under pressure, Wednesbury took the lead with a try from Mike Chivers, converted by Nick Biddlecombe.

Shortly afterwards Biddlecombe kicked another penalty given by both touch judges but not by the referee.

Biddlecombe rectified this three minutes later, kicking another penalty to increase Wednesbury's lead.

Handsworth, on one of their rare moments in the Wednesbury half, took advantage of mistake by

Wednesbury's defence to score their first try and convert.

Jubilation

Five minutes later, Biddlecombe was on target again kicking his second penalty of the game to increase Wednesbury's lead.

However, jubilation was short-lived as Handsworth kicked a penalty, reducing the visitors' half-time lead to 13-10.

In the second half Handsworth were playing down the slope and used the advantage much better than Wednesbury had in the first period.

But after 10 minutes

Wednesbury scored again when Biddlecombe stepped up to kick his third penalty.

In rushing to take the conversion he slipped and missed the kick.

Another treble for Letford as Yeltz march on

Birch Coppice Ladies 0

Halesowen Town Ladies 6

HALESOWEN marched into the Birmingham County League Cup quarter-finals with a resounding victory over Division One Birch Coppice.

Four goals from the prolific Rachel Letford, netting her seventh hat-trick of the campaign, eased the Yeltz through.

Shannie Jennings netted from the penalty spot and Dominique McKee's rasping volley rounded off the scoring.

Halesowen were urged to press from the back. Plenty of possession saw them create numerous chances and the deadlock was broken when Dani Reade's through ball sent Letford clear to slot past the stranded keeper. Becky Jones provided the second, again for Letford.

The writing was on the wall for the home side when Jones' chip set up Letford to complete her treble.

Interval

It was one-way traffic with Halesowen keeper Vicki Jones a mere spectator. Jennings scored from the spot in the 40th minute and before the interval Letford bagged her fourth when picked out by a fine cross from wingress Chloe Harris.

Charlotte Byatt went close to scoring her first goal of the season with a fine run from the back.

The final goal came from a corner taken by Lauren Gilberto. The ball was headed out to McKee, who promptly smashed it back into the net on the volley from 25 yards.

Manager Scott McKee said: "It was important to keep our shape and discipline and play our football."

"We move on to the quarter-finals and hopefully can bring some silverware back to Halesowen."



Halesowen captain Dani Reade on the ball against Birch Coppice

TCR are set to go the distance

WEDNESBURY team Total Control Racing are looking for a distance year.

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Yeltz still making push for play-offs

Leek Town 0 Halesowen Town 2
A SUPER performance by Halesowen saw them maintain their unbeaten run in 2013 and continue a push for the Evo-Stik Division One South play-offs.

The result was built on them adapting better to a difficult surface, soaking up a lot of pressure – and some outstanding saves by goalkeeper Paul Evans.

Halesowen had the first chance on 15 minutes when Ben Haseley linked up with Luke Corbett who put the ball wide.

Leek started to come into the game after this but found it difficult to break down the stubborn visiting defence.

The Yeltz again went closest to opening the scoring in the first period when Aaron Griffiths twice struck the bar just before the break.

The pitch got heavier in the second half and Leek again tried to force the pace, only to find Evans in brilliant form.

On the hour Halesowen did get in front when the Leek defence failed to deal with a ball into the box and Corbett took it round the home keeper and placed his shot into the net.

Five minutes from time, Ben Haseley missed a chance to make the game safe when he fluffed a one-on-one with the goalkeeper, though the pitch again may have played its part.

But on 87 minutes, Haseley made no mistake from the spot for his 34th goal of the season after Jean-Michel Gueyes was brought down in the box.

Much better from the Bs

Wednesfield 2 Bustleholme 0
BUSTLEHOME put in a much-improved display, but it was the same old conclusion as Wednesfield took the three West Midlands League Premier points.

It was an open game but, despite a bright start from the Bs, they fell behind after 20 minutes. A right-wing cross saw Keiron Whittaker head past goalkeeper Sam Slater, making his debut for Bustleholme.

The visitors pressed for an equaliser with Craig Clews, Jake Foster and Ricky Martin all going close.

But in the 90th minute, a quick throw-in set up Ryan Carter to drive home the second goal.

Old Hales win lets them pull away in second

Old Halesonians 4 Stratford 2

THIS win over fourth-placed Stratford let Old Hales pull away in second spot in the MRHA West Midlands Premier.

The men's firsts started well, piling on pressure but were patient and the opening came after 15 minutes, as a direct ball from Simon Palmer found Chris Hill in the D and he turned to fire past the Stratford keeper.

Stratford reverted to aerial passes, but Hales keeper Alex Fraser was untroubled. The game

Old Halesonians Hockey Club

became stretched and some quick thinking by Palmer produced his second assist of the game.

The player-coach took a quick self-pass and fired across a packed D where a diving Paul Woodall, at the back post, found the net.

Tom Bulteel grabbed Hales' third early in the second half.

Stratford appeared to go into self-destruct mode as, soon after,

Old Hales found another goal to

make it 4-0. Hill pounced on a

defensive mix-up after a deflection off the keeper's pads. Despite onrushing Stratford defenders, Hill rounded the keeper and flicked into the net from what seemed an impossible angle.

As Old Hales stepped off the gas Stratford grabbed a goal as the ball was slipped under keeper Alex Fraser. Stratford stole a second three minutes from time, but victory meant that with five games left, Stratford cannot catch them.

Finchfield 2 Old Halesonians 2

Old Hales men's seconds claimed their first away point of the season with a hard-fought draw at Finchfield.

Hales went in front early on as Graham Knight scored.

They held on until half-time, despite an onslaught of penalty corners from Finchfield.

Nic Penn extended their lead when he eased the ball past the Finchfield keeper to find the net.

Finchfield battled back and the

pressure of cheap penalty corners

finally told as the ball was deflected past Hales keeper Steven Charlton.

Finchfield then snatched a point when they equalised from a penalty stroke after the ball hit Jake Brooke on the line. In the final moments, both teams hit the woodwork but the game ended all-square.

Other Results: Old Hales Ladies firsts 1 Droitwich Spa 13, Worcester 4 Old Hales thirds 3, Old Hales thirds 3, Old Hales 5, Oldfield 5 (Sunday), Old Hales fourths 10 Bourmville 1, Old Hales fifth 0, Oldton & West, Warwick 2, Bourmville 2 Old Hales Badgers 2.

Win may have big bearing over title

Worcester Ladies 0

Barford Tigers Ladies 1

BARFORD LADIES won at Worcester in a first versus second clash that may help decide the Worcestershire League Division Three title.

Tigers, without three key players, gave debuts to Simran Dugun, Jodie Banks and Rav Dhillon, as Worcester had the strongest team to face Tigers this season.

Barford's attacking style saw them go close to scoring in the first 10 minutes through Stacey Nash and Hannah Yates.

A period of counter-attacking saw both teams defend with great resolve.

Worcester threatened on the wings without clear chances as attacks were snuffed out by the Tigers' defensive unit, backed up by tireless covering runs from midfield of captain Leanne Homer and Nash.

Barford got the crucial goal with a counter-attack.

Charn Gill started a passing move inside Tigers' half which ended in Emily Homer releasing Nash down the right wing. She beat several defenders before sending a pinpoint cross for Bianca Homer to slot the ball past the diving keeper.

The second half started with Tigers once again on the attack with new girls Dhillon and Dugun combining to create a chance for Gill which was well saved.

More chances followed with Leanne Homer, Yates and Nash all having shots cleared off the line.

Barford came under pressure but saw the game out and now have an 11-point lead at the top of the table going into Saturday's match at Redditch (noon).

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STRIKER AIMS FOR A PLACE IN EUROPE

STRIKER Romelu Lukaku has challenged Albion to aim for Europe as he targeted a memorable end to his "wonderful" season.

The on-loan teenager insists the Baggies can still gate-crash the battle for Europa League places despite a mid-season slide that saw them lose pace with the Premier League's top clubs. Steve Clarke's side's flying start to the season took them third in November but they are now ninth – five points off the sixth place that would give them a chance of European qualification.

But Lukaku, who scored as the Baggies returned to winning ways at Liverpool, said: "Europe is still a target, especially for me."

"I think that's the next step for me and I think it is the next step for the club as well."

Lukaku has bagged 10 goals despite starting just 11 times in the Premier League and he admitted he has been overjoyed with his time at The Hawthorns.

Capable

"This year has been wonderful," said the Chelsea youngster, who was named Albion's Zoopla player of the month for January and received the award from prize-winners Iain Caldecott and his son Hayden, 10.

"When I joined I wasn't sure we would be this high in the league, but after three games I knew we were capable and I knew it was going to be good for me."

"The league is long and we have 12 games to go."

"We are in a good position and the European spots are right in front of us. With the qualities we have I think we can make it."

Meanwhile, Clarke admitted, however, that young striker Saido Berahino is unlikely to return to Peterborough on loan in the immediate future because of an ongoing knee problem.

The England youth international returned from Posh because of the injury and London Road boss Darren Ferguson has expressed an interest in re-signing him.

"We need to get him fit and see where he is then," said Clarke.

by Steve Madeley

England Under-21s centre-back is a part of his plans after allowing Dawson to join Bolton on loan.

Clarke, who watched the 22-year-old in action in the Trotters' 1-1 draw at Derby this week, said: "We sent Craig out to get games."

"We know what we've got in Craig. We've got a good, young, English prospect for the future."

"His future is here. That's something I said when he went out on loan and I will repeat it again. We will keep an eye on him and we're pleased he chose Bolton because it's a good club and he can learn there."

"And it was important he went somewhere where they try to play the right way."

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Youngsters 'lovin' it' with £1m legend Francis



Trevor Francis gets the Halesowen Town colts cheering at a training session at Earls High School in the town

FORMER England footballer Trevor Francis inspired a new generation of footballers as visited a Halesowen

for the awards. Paul Kelsall, coach mentor, said: "We have set up a Saturday soccer school and it is free for everyone to come along to."

"We wanted to make sure it was open to all communities regardless of age or ability. Around 30 youngsters attend every week."

"Last year we were nominated through Birmingham County FA as development club of the year and then through that, this year's nomination for McDonald's Community Award asked us if we would be happy to kick off this year's nominations."

As well as watching teams play, the former Birmingham City player and manager posed for photographs, did some coaching and chatted to young

stars and parents at the event, held at Earls High School, Furnace Lane, Halesowen.

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